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Current History

FEBRUARY, 1990

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This issue provides a broad overview of the changes in the Middle East during a period when new dimensions added to old tensions. As our introductory article indicates, the efforts of the new United States President underscore "his understanding of the continuing agenda for the United States in this area of the world—an area still in turmoil, awash in modern weaponry. . . . Thus 1989 proved to be a year in which a new administration began to shape its perspectives toward the region, but played a relatively modest role."

The United States Role in the Middle East

BY ROBERT E. HUNTER

Vice President, Regional Programs, Center for Strategic and International Studies

THE year 1989 began as a time of promise for United States foreign policy—in the Middle East and in many other parts of the globe. The cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union—the world's defining relationship for more than four decades—was beginning to change decisively. The Iran-Iraq War had finally come to an end. Soviet troops were to depart from Afghanistan by the middle of February. The United States had just decided to open a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)—perhaps not signaling a critical departure in Arab-Israeli peacemaking diplomacy, but at least indicating new avenues to explore. And the United States and the world awaited the inauguration of the forty-first United States President, George Herbert Walker Bush, who would lead his nation, its foreign policy and its engagement in the Middle East into a new decade.

Probably no factor defined the United States approach to the Middle East during 1989 more than a development that did not focus primarily on that region: the rapid shift in United States-Soviet relations—or, more particularly, in Soviet attitudes toward the outside world. The principal locus of developments was elsewhere: in talks to control intercontinental-range nuclear weapons; in a gradual political thaw in Europe, which had been the primary area of the cold war; and in statements made by Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev about playing a cooperative and conciliatory role in the international community. Clearly, two acts internal to the Soviet Union—the proclaiming of

glasnost (openness) and perestroika (economic restructuring)—were having some impact on the way in which the Soviet Union would engage other states and define its security and political interests.

By the beginning of 1989, the United States had begun to pick up the signals relating to the Middle East as well as to other regions. During complex, indirect negotiations to encourage the PLO to meet United States conditions for a dialogue, Moscow clearly nudged the Palestinian leadership to take the plunge. In 1988, Soviet leaders had publicly chastised Syria for obduracy and were less than wholehearted in their support of Syrian requests either for political support or for advanced weaponry. The Soviet Union began to ease restrictions on the emigration of those people who wished to leave, including many Soviet Jews: clearly Moscow had calculated the costs in the Arab world of helping Israel to offset somewhat its loss of people (even though most emigrants from the Soviet Union preferred to go to the United States). And in the final stages of the Iran-Iraq War, Moscow worked for a cease-fire, both on its own and by supporting the efforts of others, including the United Nations (UN) Secretary General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar.

Most important, as it became clear that there was a sea change in Soviet attitudes and policy, the United States began to recalculate its own policies, a process that was accelerated after President Bush stated his belief that the cold war was winding down and formally declared that the United States had a stake in Gorbachev's success and the success of

perestroika. In fact, changing perceptions of the Soviet factor in the Middle East had an instrumental impact on calculations by the Bush administration about its own role in the region—at least in most areas. Only in southwest Asia and in the Persian Gulf was the Bush administration particularly concerned about Soviet objectives. Even with this exception, changes taking place in overall United States-Soviet relations led the Bush administration to make new assessments about the relative importance of the Middle East.

ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH

For decades, judgments that new administrations have made about the Middle East have begun with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Until the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of 1979, that was true in large part because of the enduring risks of a major Arab-Israeli conflict and, with it, the risk of United States-Soviet confrontation, as happened at least to some degree in the wars of 1956, 1967 and 1973. At times, there was also the incipient threat of the so-called Arab oil weapon—the possibility that, in order to affect United States policy toward Israel and related issues, key Arab oil producers would use their economic leverage.

By the time of the inauguration of President Ronald Reagan in 1980, the new treaty had removed most of the risk of an Arab military attack on Israel—after all, Israel had succeeded against all comers and Egypt was out of the military balance. By the same token, the chances of a United States-Soviet confrontation had dropped precipitously. And despite continuing high oil prices, for a variety of reasons—including the preoccupation of Persian Gulf suppliers with events in revolutionary Iran—there was little prospect of an Arab oil embargo against the United States. Nevertheless, President Reagan had to make basic calculations about the Arab-Israeli conflict, if only because there was an ongoing peace process, based on the 1978 Camp David Accords, and all parties in the Middle East expected the United States to continue playing the role it had assumed more than a decade earlier.

By 1989, however, the region had successfully survived another eight years without major movement in peacemaking. It had weathered the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the withdrawal of Jordan's King Hussein from the peace process in 1988 and the attenuation of the peace efforts undertaken by outgoing Secretary of State George P. Shultz—efforts that had never been given much chance nor much commitment on the part of the Reagan administration.

There was, however, the intifada, the Arab uprising in the West Bank and Gaza that had begun

in December, 1987, and had led many American supporters of Israel for the first time to urge that the United States government take a leading role in peacemaking. After Israel restricted media access to the occupied territories in 1988, however, worldwide attention to the intifada had declined. It remained a critical, perhaps decisive, question for the future of Israel, but it did not seem to the new administration to be the stuff of geostrategic challenge.

This seemed especially true because of the remarkable changes taking place in Soviet policy. Through 1987 and 1988, a key issue in the debate about peacemaking had been a potential role for the Soviet Union, which was petitioning widely for inclusion in the process. With the United States relatively unengaged, support had emerged everywhere in Europe and the Middle East, except in Israel, for an international conference that would include the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. That proposal was a code for bringing in the Soviet Union, and the idea was resisted, not only by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his Likud party, but also by many American and other outside observers who feared that such a step would enable the Soviet Union to meddle in the peace process without being required first to demonstrate willingness to take a responsible approach to complicated issues.

In 1989, however, what was happening elsewhere in United States-Soviet relations reduced the intensity of opposition to permitting Moscow to play a role: the Soviet Union no longer seemed poised to be a spoiler. Remarkably, pressure on the United States and Israel to include the Soviet Union in peacemaking also declined, perhaps in part because the Bush administration was apparently ready to become engaged in peacemaking, in contrast to the Reagan administration.

In fact, the peace process and the United States role in it were different in 1989. During the presidential campaign of 1988, various American groups had canvassed the possibilities for the new administration. The incoming Bush team believed that the politics of the individual parties in the region would have to evolve before the policies of the United States could be effective. This became known as the "ripening" process, a progressive changing of attitude both in Israel and among its potential interlocutors.

The decisive moment was the December 14, 1988, agreement by Secretary Shultz to open a dialogue with the PLO. In his judgment, PLC chairman Yasir Arafat had met three conditions set down by the United States, beginning with the United States commitment to Israel of September 1, 1975:

The United States will not recognize or negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization so long as [it] does not recognize Israel's right to exist and does not accept [UN] Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The terms in which Arafat embraced the United States conditions were so carefully worded (along with the requirement that the PLO "renounce terrorism") that debate about his intentions would have been legitimate. Shultz, however, made a command decision: Arafat would be taken at his word and questioned no further. In so doing, the United States Secretary of State made a gift to President-elect George Bush. Whatever else might happen, the Bush administration would not have to decide whether to deal with the PLO.

In fact, this recognition gave point and purpose to the concept of "ripening." Israel's politics had to take account of the fact that its principal patron was accepting a legitimate role for the PLO. At the same time, Palestinian politics also had to change, as the PLO found itself talking directly to the United States, through representatives in Tunis. For the first time in its history, the PLO leadership had to accept responsibility for its actions as an indirect but acknowledged participant in the peace process. To this end, the Bush administration became reluctant to see violent acts committed against Israeli-styled "terrorism" or laid at the feet of the PLO.

In retrospect, the opening of the United States-PLO dialogue was a transforming moment in the history of Arab-Israeli relations. As 1989 progressed, it became clear that key points had become firmly established, whereas in the past there had been dispute or ambiguity. Henceforth, the primary issue between Israel and the Arabs was the Palestinian question; Israel's interlocutor was to be, in some guise, Palestinian, not another party like Egypt or Jordan—even if the latter were eventually involved in a final settlement. And, like it or not, the PLO would play a role, direct or indirect, even though the United States and Israeli governments still talked about potential differences between Palestinians living in the territories and those in the diaspora.

Although there were changes in the context within which avenues to peace were being debated, the Bush administration was not guided solely by perceptions of the relationship between the Arab-Israeli conflict and United States-Soviet relations. The threat of an Arab oil weapon seemed remote, although it might reemerge during the 1990's if the trend of rising United States dependence on imported oil continued unabated. But other developments increased United States sensitivity to the need for involvement, in addition to the traditional incentives provided by close American ties to and

concern for the state of Israel. These developments included the likely proliferation within the region both of ballistic missiles and of unconventional weapons—especially chemical weapons. Further evidence also emerged that Israel had nuclear weapons and was cooperating with South Africa on the means of delivery. While the potential for inter-state conflict remained low, certainly lower than the actuality of the intifada, the Bush administration decided that it could not adopt the passive role that had dominated most of the Reagan years.

THE ISRAELI INITIATIVE

But how to proceed? Following a classic American tactic of waiting to be asked for suggestions, Secretary of State James A. Baker called for "new ideas" on the part of the local parties and especially for concrete Israeli recommendations—a position underlined by Baker's hint that Israel might have to deal directly with the PLO. The United States challenge was accepted by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who was under pressure at home to be more accommodating in the face of the continuing Arab uprising. During a visit to Washington, D.C., in April, Shamir discussed his chosen route to peace and, on May 14, it was formally presented in full. This position was, in fact, derived from provisions of the Camp David Accords regarding autonomy for the territories—a process that had been effectively abandoned early in the Reagan administration. The Israeli plan provided for "free and democratic elections among the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District," in order to choose "a representation" to "conduct negotiations for a transitional period of self-rule." Also as provided in the Accords, "at a later state, negotiations will be conducted for a permanent solution."

This was not a bold break with the past; indeed, it was clearly intended to exclude the PLO and to hold out the possibility of avoiding a trade of "land for peace." Predictably, the Arab states and the PLO dismissed the Israeli plan out of hand.

Having chosen to give up the initiative, the Bush administration faced a critical choice: whether to treat Shamir's proposal as an unattainable goal, perhaps a ploy to prevent serious negotiations, or to take it at face value and make it the basis for United States policy. The United States chose the latter course, even though it did not have much hope for success. At least in this way Israel would be actively involved in the process and the central point would be underlined: Israel had accepted the Palestinians as its negotiating partner.

The administration was obviously frustrated by the limited extent of the Israeli initiative, however. This was made evident in Secretary Baker's speech

on May 22 to the annual Washington policy conference of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). He urged the Arabs to end the economic boycott of Israel and to stop trying to exclude it from the UN; and he urged the Palestinians to turn the intifada into a "dialogue of politics and diplomacy" with Israel. But he spoke even more bluntly to Israel which, he said, must give up "the unrealistic vision of a greater Israel" in order to gain peace. It must "forswear annexation" of its occupied territories, "stop settlement activity" and "reach out to the Palestinians as neighbors who deserve political rights."

This speech seemed to convey a United States intention to play an active role and to take an approach less sympathetic to Israeli concerns—at least to those of Prime Minister Shamir—than had been true of the Reagan administration. Curiously, there was little follow-up; the supporters of Shamir's position did not face active American opposition, nor were Shamir's opponents, including the Israeli Labor party, bolstered by United States activism.

Initiative thus passed to a third party, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who (in July) presented a list of 10 points regarding elections that seemed patterned after Baker's AIPAC speech. He tried to pin down even more precisely, in terms favorable to Arab positions—like the participation of residents of East Jerusalem—the conditions for holding elections in the territories. While dismissed by Shamir—though largely accepted by Labor—this initiative formed the basis for a potential Israeli-Egyptian dialogue and kept the focus where Washington wanted it: on linking Israel and the Palestinians in the peace process and sustaining the basic validity of the Shamir proposal. Secretary Baker added five further points that attempted to promote the Egyptian role as a way station to engaging the Palestinians and to finding common ground. Again, the points stated, "the United States. . . understands that elections and negotiations will be in accordance with the Israeli initiative." But Baker also tried to move beyond a process limited simply to the modalities of elections, to recognize that "the Palestinians will be free to raise issues that relate to their opinion on how to make elections and negotiations succeed." That, in effect, staked out a United States position: elections in the territories must be the start, not the end of the process.

Before the end of 1989, this sifting of fine points went further, including demands by the Israeli government—while declaring itself prepared to accept Baker's five points—that would exclude even an indirect role for the PLO in selecting representatives to talk about elections and that would limit discussion precisely to these modalities.

Thus the Bush administration continued to play a modest role as a potential broker between Israel and its neighbors, while working to make the basic principle of Israeli-Palestinian dialogue irreversible. Following years of stasis, the divided nature of the Israeli government, the departure of Jordan from the peace process and the opening of the United States-PLO dialogue, there was merit in focusing on the minutiae of modalities, although they were at least three levels away from discussions about critical issues of territory, people and peace. It is a gamble that may yet pay off with a basic realignment of the politics of the key parties; but that is far from assured.

With the Arab-Israeli conflict apparently so insignificant in comparison with the great leaps of European history and the basic reshaping of East-West relations, time seemed infinitely elastic in the Middle East in 1989. If history in this part of the world is any guide, however, that is unlikely to prove true; as so often in the past, time in the Middle East will probably work more strongly against political and human progress than for it. United States passivity—judged absolutely, though not in comparison with the flaccid period of the Reagan administration—has been most unwise.

TIE TO THE PERSIAN GULF

As in recent years, in 1989 the people of the United States were reminded of their inability to be isolated from events in the Middle East when, once again, an act of terrorism was vividly presented on television. On July 28, Israel kidnapped from Lebanon Sheik Abdul Karim Obeid, a Shiite Muslim leader who purportedly had been engaged in terrorism. This act, itself, was presumably a reflection of Prime Minister Shamir's political vulnerability after his meetings with Palestinian leaders, including avowed representatives of the PLO.

A shadowy group, the self-styled Organization of the Oppressed on Earth, promptly threatened to assassinate United States Marine Lieutenant Colonel William R. Higgins, an official of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization who had been seized in February, 1988. On July 31, videotape of Higgins's body hanging from a scaffold was distributed to the Western media—the shocking brutality of the videotape further evidence of the partnership of modern terrorism and television.

This was the first crisis of George Bush's presi-

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"... the most vital political accomplishment of the PLO during the 20 years before the intifada was to maintain the existence and independence of the movement. But in the 1990's, only the transition from ... a terrorist organization to an organization primarily oriented toward a political settlement will keep the PLO on center stage."

The Palestinians: The Decisive Year?

BY GRAHAM E. FULLER

Senior Political Scientist, The RAND Corporation

IN one sense, the Palestinians and the Israelis have never been closer to peace in the half-century of conflict between the two peoples, primarily because of the major moves toward political and diplomatic realism taken under pressure of the Palestinian uprising (the intifada). While the ideological distance between the two parties is narrower than it has been in the past few decades, the costs to both parties of traversing the remaining distance may be extremely high. Regrettably, violence and rage will almost surely characterize the final stages before settlement. Indeed, such a settlement does not appear to be on the horizon at the moment, but the outlines are clearly visible.

The intifada is now moving into its third year and constitutes the single most important new "fact" in the Palestinian-Israeli struggle. Whereas the status quo on the West Bank—continuing Israeli occupation—had been an acceptable interim arrangement to Israel for nearly 20 years, it is no longer so. The consequences of the intifada for both Israel and the Palestinians are serious, far-reaching and growing. The impact of the intifada itself was dramatically augmented during the past 14 months by a series of critical political steps taken by the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) that have injected decisive new fluidity into the situation; these steps include the proclamation of a Palestinian state and a provisional government by the Palestine National Council (PNC) in November, 1988; PLO chairman Yasir Arafat's formal recognition of Israel's right to exist and his forswearance of terrorism in December, 1988; the immediate opening thereafter of a formal United States dialogue with the PLO; and the blessing of the Arab heads of state for Arafat's policies at the Arab summit in Casablanca in May, 1989. These events have changed the political map.

In this author's view, the ultimate establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza is

now inevitable; the critically important questions are only how and when. The "how" will exert a immense impact on the character of the Palestinian-Israeli relationship for decades to come.¹ And a considerable element of the Israeli body politic is determined to prevent such a Palestinian state.

To conclude that the establishment of a Palestinian state is inevitable is not to say that its establishment will be easy. But there are really only two realistic "permanent outcomes" of the Palestinian-Israeli struggle.

In one case, the Palestinians will achieve their independent state. Their goal will be attained through their own absolute commitment to that goal, and because the ultimate cost to Israel of holding another people captive will become too high in political, economic, social, moral and international terms.

As an alternative, under one set of circumstances or another Israel will drive the 1.7 million Palestinians out of the Israeli-occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza. The political and moral cost of such a brutal expulsion would be exceptionally high and would be viewed as intolerable. Most Israelis would oppose such an act as repugnant.

Between these two possibilities there seems to be little meaningful middle ground. Any other arrangement, like some kind of local autonomy in confederation with Israel and Jordan, is strictly interim—a way station before a more permanent settlement. At this juncture in the evolution of their national movement, Palestinians will accept nothing less than self-determination and their own sovereign state.

Israel's Labor party and Arafat's moderate wing of the PLO seem to be within diplomatic striking distance. But even if Arafat were able to dominate the deliberations of the PLO, the same cannot be said for Labor in Israeli politics. A settlement between Israel and the Palestinians does not seem possible in the near term, given the dominant Israeli Likud coalition's determination neither to negotiate with the PLO nor to accept an independent Palestinian state. This impasse is deeply ideological

¹For a detailed study of the intifada and its alternative outcomes, see Graham E. Fuller, *The West Bank of Israel* (Santa Monica, Calif.: The RAND Corporation, National Defense Research Institute, 1989), RAND/R-3777-OSD.

rather than merely tactical; almost certainly it cannot be breached through creative diplomatic formulas and the fancy footwork of "process." Only a major change in the very thinking—or the fortunes—of the Likud will reopen the door to diplomacy and negotiation.

THE WEST BANK AND GAZA

The intifada has continued largely unabated through the past year, but its character has changed subtly in ways that encourage hope on both sides that it is either strengthening and deepening its roots or, conversely, fizzling out. On the one hand, the intifada is more than ever a way of life; everyone in the occupied territories recognizes that there will be a long struggle. Sacrifices in blood, hardship and privation will continue indefinitely. Institutionalization of the intifada continues as the West Bank population is forced to create institutions to make life liveable in self-imposed isolation from Israel. More important, anger and hostility toward Israel are growing, while the population is becoming ever more accustomed to the use of violence to attain its political goals. The institutionalization of violence as a permanent factor of daily life between the two peoples contains some disturbing implications for the future coexistence of a Palestinian and an Israeli state.

The pressures of the intifada on the West Bankers and the Gazans, while serving to unite the national movement more deeply in some sense, have also served to turn Palestinian against Palestinian in ways not often witnessed during the first year of the intifada; Palestinian vigilante groups have been executing Palestinians accused of collaboration with Israeli authorities in greater numbers than ever before. This kind of civil conflict worries many Palestinians who fear a loss of discipline among the fighters; many Israelis take this as a heartening sign that Palestinians are now turning on themselves in their frustration and inability to force the Israelis out of the territories.

Civil conflict among the Palestinians themselves could become serious, but such incidents do not yet seem to represent a broad trend toward internecine warfare. The Palestinian movement has consistently embraced a fairly broad spectrum of political belief, ranging from Islamic fundamentalism to secular nationalism, to communism. Crippling ideological strain has not yet emerged among the Palestinians, but it cannot be ruled out over the long run if frustrations build indefinitely, compelling moderation to give way to radical goals and methods. In an atmosphere of daily violence, some degree of internal score-settling and vigilantism is typical, but the Palestinian Unified Command in the occupied territories must demonstrate overall

control if the movement is to maintain the discipline and coherence it has had in the past.

On the Israeli side, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin continues to search for the combination of military, economic and administrative pressures that will cause the intifada to collapse. Ever more imaginative weapons are now directed against intifada activists; still, lethal rubber and plastic bullets are replacing more controversial standard ammunition and the use of clubs for the deliberate breaking of arms and legs. Israeli soldiers are now authorized to shoot Palestinians who mask their faces—the mask is regarded as an ipso facto statement of violent intent. Large-scale punitive confiscation of personal belongings from the citizens of a Palestinian town that refused to pay taxes ended in a defeat for the occupying authorities when the Israeli army was finally forced to back down from the tactic. Gazan workers en masse have been forbidden access to their daily jobs in Israel for certain periods; electronically coded identification cards were imposed to limit access to Israel to those who had received security clearance from Israeli authorities; Palestinian efforts to defeat this tactic have so far failed. The Palestinians have continued to develop comestic institutions for education and health care.

Whatever the success or failure of these Israeli tactics, however, Rabin himself recognizes that there is no military solution to the Palestinian problem. However harsh Rabin's policies have been, they seem less designed to quell the uprising than to hold the line until a political solution is found.

THE PLO

The intifada, more than any other factor, has finally pushed the PLO toward greater realism: a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza represents a far more realistic goal than the long-trumpeted "military solution" against Israel or the creation of a "single secular binational democratic state in all of Palestine." The PLO has been forced to deal with West Bank demands that it move to capitalize politically on the sacrifices of the intifada and to preserve the only remaining "Palestinian homeland" left—the land of the West Bank and Gaza.

But the occupied territories are not the PLO's only constituency; it must also look to the Palestinian diaspora, which shares an interest in a settlement that would include meaningful Palestinian citizenship, a passport, the opportunity to return to a West Bank Palestinian state and to receive compensation for lands lost in Israel. But the West Bank and Gaza are nonetheless the PLO's key constituency and have created the engine—the intifada—that has produced the first major progress for the Palestinian

cause in many years. The PLO cannot afford to lose control of the West Bank, or to allow a new leadership to emerge there by default that would make a separate settlement with Israel, excluding broader PLO influence and the interests of the diaspora.

Indeed, for the first time the intifada has cast the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza in a major leadership role. For 20 years after the occupation began in 1967, the Palestinians in the occupied territories were largely quiescent. While political evolution and activism there were a continuing part of the political scene, they rarely posed a significant challenge to Israel. Indeed, the Palestinians were apparently looking to an external savior for liberation—at various times to Egypt, Jordan, Syria, the PLO, the Soviet Union or the United States—but they were never looking to their own actions.

It was during this 20-year era that the PLO was virtually the sole driving force of the Palestinian national movement. A decade of terrorism and international violence, aircraft hijackings and the shocking attack on the Israeli Olympic team in Munich in 1972 all served to create a very bloody but very real image of the PLO. In the real world, terrorism often works, and the PLO's actions definitively placed the Palestinian cause on the international political map in a way that might well not have occurred in the absence of violence and terror.

Debate will rage indefinitely about whether or not the Palestinians have missed opportunities for a settlement, but the Palestinians know that those potential settlements did not include a Palestinian state. In the end, the most vital political accomplishment of the PLO during the 20 years before the intifada was to maintain the existence and independence of the movement. But in the 1990's, only the transition from a nationalist movement and a terrorist organization to an organization primarily oriented toward a political settlement will keep the PLO on center stage.

The PLO under Arafat, in fact, seems to be making this transition effectively, with the realization that a failure to deal decisively and coherently with its own internal factions will cost it the leadership role. And it is precisely for this reason that Israel seeks to eliminate the leading role of the PLO in the settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; it hopes to strip the conflict of any quality of a national struggle between Palestinians and Israelis and reduce it to an accommodation between Israel and the populations of the West Bank and Gaza. Thus, Israel is trying to drive a wedge between the West Bank Palestinians and the PLO. All Israeli election proposals have been directed to this end over the past year.

Israel and the United States have both been engaged in a 20-year search for Palestinian interlo-

cutors who do not represent mainline Palestinian aspirations. The United States finally abandoned the long and fruitless task that led it through various versions of a "Jordanian option," whereby the Jordanians would keep the Palestinians under some kind of restraining mechanism in a Jordanian-dominated entity. Only when Jordanian King Hussein finally and formally disavowed such a nonstarter in 1988 did the United States drop this quest. Israel, however, persists in the search for Palestinians who would settle for less than a state and who would exclude the PLO from the process. This persistence flies in the face of the reality of the intifada; if nothing else, the intifada has united the West Bank around the ultimate goal of a state under the long-standing symbol of the PLO. The fundamental impasse between Palestinian and Likud aspirations is now clear.

ELECTIONS

But the world is no longer comfortable with a continued impasse; pressures have been building on all sides, including broad elements in Israel, to articulate an approach to peace. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's April, 1989, proposal for elections on the West Bank was basically conceived in desperation; Israel had to formulate a plan that would show that it was not entirely negative and was actively seeking a solution. The plan was aimed at an American audience even more than an Israeli audience. In all honesty, the Likud would have preferred to recognize that the differences with the Palestinians were irreconcilable and unbridgeable.

Not surprisingly, the only Likud plan that could even pretend to be faithful to its own principles was basically a nonstarter; it involved the free elections of West Bank and Gazan delegates who would then negotiate the terms of an interim solution; a final solution would include Jordan and Egypt, but would implicitly exclude a Palestinian state and PLO participation. The Likud plan was hardly bold or promising—it was not designed to be—but Washington had the creativity to seize it and try to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Almost any election proposal, creatively handled, could lead to the establishment of a legitimate Palestinian political body that could, over the longer run, serve as the basis for an independent Palestinian state. Indeed, such an elected body would probably directly reflect the PLO's views and policies, and could ultimately give the external PLO organization the formal and key voice in the process.

But the Likud cannot accept Washington's efforts to turn the plan into something it was never intended to be. After all, the Likud has a clearer and franker vision of the problem; it rightly perceives that the question has nothing to do with the nature

of the PLO. Anything that leads to the legitimization of the PLO will inexorably pave the way for the Palestinian state. Thus, any election proposal from Shamir's government must explicitly exclude a process that legitimizes a PLO role, and must explicitly exclude a Palestinian state. Under pressure from Washington, the Likud has continued to formulate and reformulate the election modalities, but the end goal is no PLO and no Palestinian state.*

Clearly, this process is unacceptable to most Palestinians and has deadlocked the process. But it is the art of diplomacy not to articulate contradiction explicitly; the hope remains that both sides can save face by going along with a process whose precise end cannot be identified. Indeed, Washington must try to establish a process that is open-ended in character, without admitting that an open-ended process will ultimately result in a Palestinian state. In the meantime, Likud must block that open-ended process if it is to remain true to its political platform.

Even if most parties recognize that an independent Palestinian state will ultimately and inevitably emerge from an election process and open-ended negotiations, the PLO's own hard-liners cannot blithely accept such an outcome on faith either. Many elements of the PNC will seek far more explicit assurance of what lies at the end of an election process and negotiations. For the process is not without some danger to the PLO. However loyal West Bank PLO members declare themselves to be to the external PLO leadership, contradictions can and will arise between the two elements when local, personal or tactical advantages differ.

The PLO naturally fears that there could well be some loss of PLO control of the process in the interim. Beyond that, PLO hard-liners fear that a moderate solution will permanently weaken the voice of radical elements within the movement. They may well demand that the peace process explicitly support their own political demands in unambiguous language—spelling out far too precisely those goals that are anathema to many Israelis. A peace process that lies along a road rich with ambiguity remains unacceptable to hard-line PLO and Likud elements.

IMPASSE

It would appear that the process is now foundering. It is highly unlikely that the Palestinians will waver in their goal of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. The Likud party is apparently headed for an even tougher line than Shamir has presented. What factors might end the impasse?

The Likud is apparently playing for time, banking on the hope that relentless pressure on the in-

tifada will force it to collapse. Perhaps, ultimately, this pressure will force Palestinians to abandon the goal of a Palestinian state, especially if it looks as if continued resistance will cost the West Bankers their very land under the relentless Israeli settlement policies in the West Bank. This same Likud strategy anticipates that a lack of progress will finally discredit Arafat and the moderate wing of the PLO. In that case, the organization will be driven to greater radicalism, violence and terrorism, thus compelling the United States to sever its ties with the PLO.

JORDAN

Alternatively, many Israeli hard-liners focus on Jordan. General Ariel Sharon's well-known thesis that "Jordan is Palestine" is more than a geographical observation; it is an operational statement of intent that seeks to establish all Palestinians in a Jordan that demographically will become the Palestinian state. Israel can then settle with Jordan, by military means if necessary. However unrealistic it is to assume that the Palestinians will leave the West Bank except through forced expulsion, the Sharon plan contains highly destabilizing elements. Disorder in Jordan cannot be ruled out; economic problems, internal dissension springing from regime liberalization or a crackdown, the growth of Islamic fundamentalism and Palestinian radicalism all represent potential threats. Similarly, severe tensions and major bloodshed in the West Bank will spark reaction in Jordan. Under almost any circumstances, Jordan is likely to be closely involved in future West Bank events. Instability in Jordan will certainly forestall any Israeli consideration of giving up the West Bank. This may be one of the unspoken calculations among hard-liners in Israel who are determined not to budge on the issue of talks with the PLO or a Palestinian state.

Unfortunately, in the Middle East it is usually a cataclysm of some kind that shakes up the status quo and allows the pieces to fall into some new and often more constructive arrangement. War is historically one of the catalysts. In fact, war seems unlikely; nearly all the parties in the region, except Syria, are strongly opposed to war, and Syria cannot move unilaterally, especially when the Soviet Union would weigh in strongly against such an adventure.

Apart from war, new Israeli elections leading to a
(Continued on page 80)

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*For a discussion of Israeli policy, see the article by Harold Waller in this issue.

"The [Jordanian] regime faces an existential challenge in trying to rebuild a governing coalition in disarray. If the regime has decided to move down the path of reform, harnessing the latent support of the various pro-government segments of society . . . is paramount. Historically, however, Jordan has been unable to establish a popular-based political party in the service of the regime."

Jordan Looks Inward

BY ROBERT SATLOFF

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FOR the last two years, Jordan has been a country turning inward. Although it remains active in regional and international affairs, the Hashemite Kingdom has been increasingly preoccupied with the gripping drama unfolding within its borders. In 1989, that drama had two show-stopping events—violence and voting.

In April, while King Hussein was visiting Washington, D.C., hundreds took to the streets in the southern cities of Kerak and Maan in violent protest against commodity price hikes mandated by the Kingdom's recently implemented stabilization agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Those riots—the worst outbreak of public discontent in nearly two decades—left 12 dead and had to be forcibly quelled by state security troops.

Seven months later, in November, 1989, Jordanians went to the polls for the first parliamentary elections in 22 years. King Hussein called these East Bank-only elections—long-promised but often postponed—in part to deflect public criticism of past government mismanagement, to elicit tacit support for the next stage of the austerity plan and to confirm the King's July, 1988, disengagement from the West Bank. However, the results were unlike any others known in the Kingdom's history. Muslim fundamentalists scored a stunning victory, capturing nearly half of Parliament's 80 seats, with government loyalists winning only a slim majority.

Both these events were elements of the "domesticization" of Jordanian political life. In Jordan, foreign policy and defense policy are traditionally the provinces of the King, while the management of the economy and internal affairs are more or less left to the government of the day. Governments (i.e., Prime Ministers) come and go. But through it all, continuity in the country's fundamental policies and political orientation—as well as supreme authority to alter those policies and that orientation—reside with the monarchy. Throughout the

mid-1980's, inter-Arab politics consumed the lion's share of the King's attention and the government's political activity.¹ When the driving forces behind Jordan's inter-Arab policy turned against the Kingdom, the regime finally turned inward, where it began to deal with the problems and challenges that had been building during its years of high-profile international activity.

Jordan's principal foreign policy objectives in the mid-1980's were threefold: subordination of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to Jordan's peace process policy; Arab solidarity with Iraq in its battle with non-Arab Iran; and restoration of friendly relations with Syria, Jordan's potentially most bellicose neighbor.

By 1988, all three goals were either met or moot. First, a successful series of Jordanian initiatives had repaired ties with Syria, including a commitment not to flout Syrian interests in the peace process. Of course, Damascus was in no position to reject appeals for Arab unity, because Syria had been isolated in the Arab world for supporting Teheran in the Gulf War.

Meanwhile, the King's inter-Arab strategy was also working. As the Arab world's senior statesman, King Hussein had been at his best stoking the fires of Arab unity under the banner of the Iraqi war effort. He had offered his country's good offices as a conduit for the Egyptian-Iraqi arms supply network that was critical to Baghdad's war effort; he was the moving force behind the emergence of an axis of moderate Arab states (Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Jordan); and he even registered moderate success in nudging Syria a little closer to the Arab consensus on the Gulf War. As host of the Arab League summit meeting in Amman in November, 1987, the King capped his diplomatic success by engineering unanimous approval for a strongly worded condemnation of Iran and by gaining Syria's acquiescence in the restoration of bilateral ties between Egypt and the other Arab states.

But the imperative need for Arab unity fostered by the Iran-Iraq War lost its appeal with the ap-

¹For an analysis of Jordan's inter-Arab politics from 1984 to 1988, see Robert Satloff, "Jordan and Reverberations of the Uprising," *Current History*, February, 1989.

proval of United Nations Security Council Resolution 598 and the imposition of a Gulf cease-fire. With that approval Jordan lost its peculiar role as a small state rallying larger and more powerful states to action. Moreover, the winding down of the Gulf War permitted the Arab world to turn its sights once again toward the politics of Palestine.

Traditionally, that politics is defined by Jordan's state of perpetual tension with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Kingdom's historic rival for the allegiance of Palestinians and for the territory of Palestine. Since the PLO's inception in 1964, Jordan and the PLO have clashed in a messy and often violent competition for the loyalty of—and control over—the Palestinians. In 1984-1985, King Hussein's tactic was a bear-like embrace of the PLO; he hoped to enlist PLO chairman Yasir Arafat as a junior partner in a peace initiative that would lend Jordan inter-Arab legitimacy to open negotiations with Israel. That effort, highlighted by the February, 1985, accord on a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, was stymied by Arafat's refusal to accept UN Security Resolution 242 and ended with the King's subsequent suspension of political coordination with the PLO in February, 1986.²

During the subsequent months, Jordan steered another course, preferring low-risk inter-Arab consensus. The King refused to shoulder the responsibility—and the burden—of working for a breakthrough to talks with Israel; it was now up to the Israelis to create the conditions acceptable to negotiations.³ Though Hussein continued a policy of tacit coordination with Israel in bolstering pro-Hashemite moderates inside the West Bank, neither he nor Israel nor their ostensible patron, the United States, showed much zest for the project. After 20 years of Palestinian quiescence on and Israeli control of the West Bank, there was very little urgency in the peace process. That lack of urgency meant the eclipse of Arafat on the inter-Arab stage. If Jordan could not subordinate the PLO,

²Amman Television Service, February 19, 1986, cited in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Near East/South Asia Report* (hereafter cited as FBIS), February 20, 1986.

³In April, 1987, Hussein and then Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of the Labor party reached a "secret" agreement outlining the framework for a proposed international peace conference. Peres, however, was unable to win Cabinet approval for the plan against the opposition of the Likud party.

⁴The nadir of Arafat's prestige was the November, 1987, Amman summit, when the Palestine question was barely discussed and he was snubbed personally by his Jordanian hosts.

⁵One direct threat was the Palestine National Council's claim to represent "all our people in *all places*, inside and outside the homeland," which could not possibly have gone unnoticed by Jordan's rulers (*italics added by author*).

⁶See Amman Domestic Service, July 31, 1988, cited in FBIS, August 2, 1988. The only official ties left between the two banks consist of Jordan's continued maintenance of Palestinian mosques and religious establishments.

obscuring it seemed the next best thing.⁴

This third leg of Jordan's grand regional strategy came to a crashing halt with the onset of the Palestinian intifada against Israel in December, 1987. The intifada returned the Palestine issue to the center of Arab politics. Even though it may not have been his doing, it offered Arafat a chance to reclaim his spot on the Arab stage with a vengeance. Hussein's own commitment to the Palestine cause was questioned by the thousands of Palestinian demonstrators whose slogans seemed to target him almost as much as the Israelis. As a result, Jordan was forced into a defensive and vulnerable role virtually overnight.

THE UPRISING

For Jordan, the intifada posed conflicting challenges. The regime's immediate concern was that the emotional pull of the intifada would engulf Jordan's own Palestinians, variously estimated at between 40 percent and 65 percent of the population. But to arrest the spread of the uprising, to distance the East Bank from the politics of the West Bank, would raise the specter of Jordan's political irrelevance in the politics of Palestine and would allow the PLO to gain a virtual stranglehold on peace process diplomacy.

In many ways, Jordan's choice was forced on it by the pace of events. The King welcomed the efforts (if not the details) of United States Secretary of State George Shultz's peace plan in early 1988 because it sidestepped the PLO and offered to restore Jordan's role in the peace process. But the final word belonged to Arafat, who appeared to prove his own indispensability by blocking any Palestinian participation in the Shultz plan.

Arafat capped his reemergence on the inter-Arab stage at an extraordinary Arab League summit meeting in Algiers in June, 1988. There, he tried not only to reestablish his imprimatur on all matters relating to Palestine but to avenge his humiliation at the Amman summit meeting eight months earlier. Although Hussein stood his ground in a combative but statesman-like defense of his country's contribution to the Palestinian cause, the Arab tide had turned against him. To salvage his personal stature and his country's security, drastic measures were needed.⁵

Those measures reached their climax with the stunning announcement by the King on July 31 that Jordan was severing all "legal and administrative ties" to the West Bank and relinquishing any Hashemite claims to the territory lost in the June, 1967, war.⁶ In "disengaging" from the West Bank, the King challenged the PLO to shoulder the full responsibility for the Palestinians. And in declaring that "Jordan is not Palestine," he took a swipe at Israeli hard-liners who contend that

the solution to the Palestinian problem is to establish a Palestinian state where the Hashemites now rule. The King's moves shocked both the United States and the Israeli diplomatic establishments; their conventional wisdom had long ago enshrined Jordan as the principal Arab partner for peace. But when the King was among the first to extend formal recognition to the "independent state of Palestine" following the PLO's declaration in November, even skeptics had to admit that Jordan's disengagement from the West Bank was more than just a short-term, tactical maneuver. For the time being, at least, the "Jordanian option" for Arab-Israeli peace, in all its various permutations, was no longer in the cards.

LOOKING INWARD

Hussein's disengagement decision brought to a close an era of fast-paced, high-profile Jordanian activity in the international arena. The end of the Gulf War and the onset of the intifada combined to deprive the Kingdom of the environmental conditions that had allowed it to assume such an extroverted identity in the mid-1980's. Instead, the Kingdom turned inward, and a variety of economic and political problems that had been brewing under the surface in the East Bank came to the surface. Indeed, history may show that the disengagement had its most significant impact inside Jordan.

The most immediate repercussions of the disengagement were felt on the relationship between Palestinians and Transjordanians. Ever since the 1970-1971 insurrection by Palestinian *fedayeen* guerrillas, Jordan's Palestinian population has led a tense double life, split between affiliation with the Palestinian national cause and a pragmatic acceptance of the realities of Hashemite rule. The disengagement forced them to choose between those two identities: being faithful to both Palestine and the throne. While this may have pleased hard-line East Bankers, some of whom even term themselves the "Transjordanian Likud," many of the Kingdom's Palestinian population began to wonder whether their status in Jordanian society was secure.

Palestinians control the bulk of wealth in Jordan's economy, and their political fears were soon translated into economic jitters. Even before the July 31 announcement, there were two small but worrisome runs on the normally stable Jordanian dinar, each resulting in a 5 percent depreciation of the currency. As summer turned to autumn, the

trickle of Palestinians selling dinars for dollars — on both the East and West Banks — turned into a flood. Despite government measures to shore up the dinar, it lost about one-third its value by late October, when the imposition of new government regulations amounted to the first flotation of the dinar in the Kingdom's history.

These shocks were only the tip of an already critical economic iceberg. Over the past few years, the Kingdom's principal sources of hard currency — remittances from workers abroad, Arab financial assistance and other spin-off benefits from the Gulf oil boom — have largely dried up. The cease-fire in the Gulf closed another source of revenue, the transshipment trade with Iraq. To be sure, Jordan was let down by the wealthier Arab states, all of which — except Saudi Arabia — failed to live up to their 1979 commitments to supply the Kingdom with billions of dollars in aid. And the Kingdom's very successful educational program — Jordan has one of the highest percentages of students in the population in the world — produces far more skilled laborers and professionals than the country can absorb. But when the fat years turned to lean in the mid-1980's, the Kingdom failed to respond with tight fiscal policy, prudent borrowing and closely managed importing of goods and foodstuffs.⁷ As a result, Jordan now faces a huge debt burden (estimated at between \$6 billion and \$8 billion), a deepening recession, a massive import bill, tenuous foreign currency reserves and a growing unemployment rate far higher than the official 10 percent.

In 1988-1989, Jordan's most pressing problem was the lack of foreign currency. In June, 1988, foreign exchange reserves were at an all-time low of \$18.7 million, a 92 percent drop from the previous July. Austerity measures unveiled in November, 1988, failed to stem the outward flow of capital. Confidence in the government's fiscal policy fell so low that Jordan was forced to withdraw an application for a \$150-million syndicated loan because it had too few takers. In February, 1989, the government tried to dam the flow of black market capital — the dinar was continuing to fall — by closing down the country's highly speculative semi-official system of money changers.⁸ In March, financing difficulties forced Jordan to "postpone indefinitely" its \$875-million purchase of British Tornado strike fighter-aircraft.

Finally, that same month, Jordan was forced to do what it had so far been able to avoid — that is, request assistance from the International Monetary Fund. Over the next four weeks, IMF economists and the government of Prime Minister Zayd Rifai hammered out a deal whereby Jordan would implement a set of austerity measures, including a cut in the military budget, in return for an immediate

⁷See Eliyahu Kanovsky, *Jordan's Economy: From Prosperity to Crisis*, The Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, Occasional Papers, No. 106, May, 1989.

⁸Amman Domestic Service, February 8, 1989, cited in FBIS, February 9, 1989.

\$150-million loan plus further assistance in debt rescheduling to aid Jordan in negotiations with the Paris Club of creditors. As a result, on April 15, the Rifai government ordered immediate increases in the price of various commodities, ranging from gasoline to cigarettes.

THE APRIL, 1989, RIOTS

In a matter of hours, Jordan's southern cities erupted in protest. In Maan, Kerak, Tafileh and, later, Madaba and even Salt, local townspeople threw rocks, looted and chanted slogans against the Rifai government's alleged mismanagement of the economy. They charged high officials with wanton corruption and an uncaring "let-them-eat-cake" attitude toward the average Jordanian worker. The four days of protest that followed were quelled only by Jordanian security forces, and left at least 12 dead and dozens injured. Embarrassingly, the King was forced to cut short a visit to Washington, D.C., and London to return home and take control of the deteriorating situation.

Economically, the IMF austerity plan was sound, but politically it touched a raw nerve. Its burden fell too heavily on low-wage Jordanian workers who had already benefited least from the Kingdom's boom years in the early 1980's. According to Crown Prince Hassan, who visited the south within hours of the outbreak of rioting, "These [IMF] measures will be more than we can bear unless we can secure Arab aid. . . ."⁹ Moreover, coinciding with the holy month of Ramadan, the plan played into the hands of Muslim fundamentalists who, in several areas, were able to exploit and exacerbate the rioting for their own political purposes.

What was especially notable about the rioting was that Transjordanians, not Palestinians, had risen in protest. Indeed, in Amman and Irbid, where much of Jordan's Palestinian population lives, the days of rioting passed virtually without incident. Palestinians, along with Jordan's liberal and left-leaning professional organizations, did little more than send petitions to the King urging him to reconsider the austerity measures and to sack Rifai. PLO officials liked to note that quiet in Jordan's refugee camps was maintained on formal instructions from Arafat in Tunis. But in fact, it was the realization among most Palestinians that participa-

⁹Interview in *ash-Sharq al-Awsat* (London), April 23, 1989, cited in FBIS, April 26, 1989.

¹⁰See Amman Domestic Service, May 29, 1989, cited in FBIS, May 31, 1989; and *ad-Dustur* (Amman), July 28, 1989, cited in FBIS, July 28, 1989.

¹¹Central Bank holdings of foreign exchange are reported to have risen from \$140 million in May to more than \$500 million in September; *Jordan Times* (Amman), September 28, 1989, cited in FBIS, October 5, 1989.

tion in rioting might rip apart the carefully woven web of coexistence inside the Kingdom that kept them off the streets. Their quiescence proved that any fear about the spread of the Palestinian uprising from the West Bank eastward was unfounded.

Of potentially greater gravity was the extent of disaffection among Transjordanians, the traditional mainstay of the Hashemite regime. Though the rioters' slogans were targeted at the Rifai government and not at the King, the monarchy had to realize the depth of popular dissatisfaction with the country's political management. Almost immediately, the regime took steps to accommodate the rioters' demands—except one. Despite government rhetoric, there has been no stepping back from the austerity measures that sparked the riots in the first place.

First, on April 27, the King dismissed Rifai and appointed in his stead chief of the royal court Sherif Zayd bin Shakir. Bin Shakir, a former armed forces commander and a distant cousin of the King, has a reputation for honesty and is seen as a champion of the Transjordanians.

Second, the government took steps to restore confidence in the dinar. Foremost among these was the reappointment, after several years out of office, of the respected economist Muhammad Said Nabulsi as governor of the Central Bank. Throughout the summer, he issued a series of sound reform measures aimed at stabilizing the dinar, bolstering the central bank's currency reserves and rationalizing the use of foreign exchange.¹⁰ In addition, the government successfully completed debt-rescheduling talks with the Paris Club of creditors in July and with the Soviet Union in August. And, perhaps most important for the short-term stability of the dinar, King Hussein solicited hundreds of millions of dollars in emergency aid in appeals to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states throughout the spring and summer. By autumn, the dinar had recovered some of its lost value and Jordan's foreign exchange picture, if not bright, was certainly not so dark as it had been six months earlier.¹¹

Third, the regime embarked on a process of political reform and hastened the restoration of parliamentary life as an outlet for political discontent. In August, 1988, following his disengagement decision, Hussein had suspended Parliament because half its members represented communities

(Continued on page 84)

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"The regime in Teheran is apparently committed to the political resolution of the Iran-Iraq conflict, to promoting domestic economic reconstruction and to its new policy of bridge-building with the West. However, it is by no means clear that such measures represent a fundamental change in the long-term domestic and foreign policy objectives of the Islamic Republic. . . ."

Iran after Khomeini

BY NIKOLA B. SCHAHGALDIAN

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THE death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini on June 3, 1989, was an important landmark in the history of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Although the Imam's death left many foreign observers uncertain about the future of that ancient country, it did not catch Teheran's Islamic authorities unprepared. Ever since Khomeini came to power, his would-be successors had always been concerned about who among them would rule after him. Indeed, only hours after the old man's death, the 83-member Council of Experts convened and heard Khomeini's last "political will." Surprisingly, his will contained no mention of any personal choice for his successor. Despite this difficulty, by a two-thirds majority the Council named Ali Khamenei, the former President, as the supreme spiritual leader of Iran.

To fill the political vacuum left by Khomeini, Iran's clerics were quick to carry out a constitutional amendment, confirmed later through a popular referendum; this eliminated the position of Prime Minister and led to the election of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani as Iran's new President in July, 1989. The elections of both Rafsanjani and Khamenei demonstrate a striking feature of post-Khomeini Iran: the rapidity and success with which the clerical establishment has consolidated its power and, through carefully staged moves, has attempted to institutionalize its rule.

Khomeini's death came at a time when Iran's clerical establishment was still grappling with the challenges that the July 18, 1988, cease-fire with Iraq had suddenly brought to the fore. These domestic and international political and economic challenges are now awaiting urgent policy decisions. Since July, the regime has continued to keep the economy ticking; however, it is clearly unable to bring about the long-awaited socioeconomic improvements it has repeatedly promised. For example, industrial and agricultural production remains in decline, finances have deteriorated further, and shortages remain chronic. The multitude of problems unleashed by an effective inflation rate of 50

percent and by the presence of millions of unemployed people and war-stricken internal refugees remain unsolved. Moreover, despite the cease-fire, the country remains on a war footing, and apparently neither the state nor the private sector is yet able to provide lasting improvements.

Because of these and many other problems, the urban poor and the bazaar merchants—the original backbone of the revolution—have cooled considerably toward the regime. At present, these feelings remain undefined; they are vague and lack political focus. In the absence of Khomeini and in part because of these economic and political developments, the domestic political situation has become fluid and more unsettled. Nevertheless, these developments have not pushed the Islamic Republic to the brink of collapse. Indeed, while religious fundamentalism, political legitimacy and socioeconomic change convulsed the post-Khomeini leadership in 1989, stabilizing factors should prevent a similar outcome in the foreseeable future.

STABILIZING FORCES

Much has been written about the manner in which the clerics achieved political power in Iran in 1979 and the reasons for their maintaining it since. However, Iran's clerical leadership remains an enigma to many outsiders. The clerics may well have gained and stayed in power because of their close association with the masses, the ideological appeal of Shiism, the clerics' repressive policies and the weakness of opposition forces. Although this explanation may be correct, there are certain aspects of this issue—crucial to a better understanding of the internal dynamics of clerics' political behavior—that need to be considered here. To begin with, religious solidarity within the ruling clerical elite has been greatly reinforced by the shared experience of many of its key leaders before and after the Islamic revolution. Early on, they had developed friendly ties through years of close association in the narrow, intensely religious and personal

world of religious schools and underground activities opposing the Shah's regime.

Not unlike members of a banned sectarian fraternity, these individuals worked, studied and lived together for many years. At the same time, their personalities, strengthened by pressures coming from the usually hostile political environment of the 1960's and 1970's, had been reinforced in many cases by close family and marriage relationships as well. Khomeini lived continuously in Qom for about 40 years, during which time he taught about 10,000 young seminary students. About 300 of these personally devoted followers constituted the central core of his underground clerical movement, which came to lead the Islamic revolution. Many of these men still occupy key political positions in Teheran.¹

Moreover, many of these people had shared prison experiences, often in the same prison or even in the same cells, throughout the 1970's. The clerics' close personal ties and shared experiences have strengthened their underlying unity in many other ways as well. For example, their intimacy has meant that they are well aware of one another's personality traits, private weaknesses, ambitions and ties to trusted colleagues. But since this knowledge is reciprocal, it gives key members of the network ample opportunity for developing various mechanisms for self-preservation and at the same time makes personal or factional rivalries among them more manageable.

Shared objectives, similar backgrounds and internal religious solidarity are not the only factors helping the clerics to hold onto political power in

¹A partial list of some 200 of Khomeini's young students who had worked underground with him in the prerevolutionary period appears in Seyyed Hamid Ruhani, *Barrasi va tahlili az nehzat-e imam Khomeini* [A Study and Analysis of Imam Khomeini's Movement] (Teheran, 1982), pp. 43-50.

²For details, consult Marshall Hodgson, "How Did the Early Shia Become Sectarian?" *Journal of American Oriental Society*, vol. 75, no. 1 (1955), pp. 1-13; and M.M. Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Safavids: Shiism, Sufism, and the Gulat* (Wiesbaden: Freiburger Islamstudien, 1972).

³For a discussion of state-clergy relations under the Pahlavis, see Michael M.J. Fischer, *From Religious Dispute to Revolution* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1980); and Shahrough Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran* (New York and Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980).

⁴Imam Jafar Sadegh is reported to have said, "Taqiyeh is the shield of faith; he who does not practice *taqiyeh* has no faith, for nine-tenths of religion is in *taqiyeh* and one-tenth in all other deeds." See Bagher Majlesi as quoted in Shoja al-Din Shafa, *Towzih al-masa'el* [Explanation of Problems] (Paris, 1987), p. 599. Also see Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), p. 176.

⁵Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shii Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shiism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 236; also Shafa, op. cit., pp. 596-600.

Iran. In addition, in their attempts to defeat their opponents and to consolidate their positions, they have come to utilize many religiously sanctioned and culturally accepted elements of traditional Iranian political behavior. They have also refined many time-tested tactics of public management and have woven these into an elaborate mechanism for political survival.

Among the main features of this mechanism is the long-established preoccupation of Shia clerics with secrecy. This concern surrounds the activities and public and private lives of most key figures in the clerical establishment. Indeed, as a rule, clergymen do not reveal authentic information about the inner dynamics or points of discord among the clergy to laymen. This unwritten rule of behavior on internal matters has much to do with the historical experience of various Shia minority sects in the formative periods of Shia doctrine and outlook.² Similarly after the 1920's, the generally repressive policies of both Pahlavi shahs against the Shia clerics hardened their secretive tendencies.³

Indeed, the practice of keeping laymen as much in the dark as possible about internal clerical matters is commonly considered a primary element in the clerics' system of preservation techniques; at the same time, mutually protective silence is viewed as a necessity to avoid or lessen strife in their own ranks.

In addition to secrecy, the ruling clerical network is distinguished by its consistent practice of *taqiyeh* and *tanfiyeh* as interconnected patterns of political behavior and tools of public management. The doctrine of *taqiyeh* or *ketman* (literally, religious dissimulation) is a traditionally vital code of behavior for the Shia clerics, developed in the eighth century. Originally, it protected the followers of Jafar Sadegh, the sixth Imam of Shias, against repression by their Sunni rulers.⁴ Later, it became an organic part of the Shia belief system and was praised and commended by Shia clerics.⁵ Dissimulation is considered lawful, and clerics resort to it whenever they believe there may be danger to their property or lives if they utter the truth. Essentially, *ketman* is used to mislead strangers and opponents about one's true beliefs and commitments if a given situation requires it. When provisions of *taqiyeh* come into play, a Shia cleric is religiously justified in taking whatever public stands he prefers without worrying about possible contradictions with positions he has taken earlier and without feeling remorse later.

More important, *taqiyeh* can be decided on jointly and practiced collectively by a group of clerics if necessary. When so used, it does not involve loss of face by the participants; on the contrary, the practice tends to increase solidarity. The religious justi-

fication of *ketman* has given the clerics an extraordinary political versatility.

The practice of *tanfīyeh* is still another dynamic principle in a cluster of operative political traditions of the Iranian clergy. In simple terms, it is a time-tested tactic for judiciously doing nothing. When a cleric senses that there is too much turmoil around him, he may resort to *tanfīyeh* in order to avoid catastrophe, preserve security, neutralize personal danger or ensure the continuity of the group.

During *tanfīyeh* a cleric usually maintains his position and ignores the tension around him. The logic behind this traditionally accepted and religiously sanctioned behavior involves certain assumptions. Sooner or later, all actors are likely to commit mistakes and eventually undo themselves; the agitated will spend their energy. Instead, when a cleric resorts to *tanfīyeh*, he concentrates his attention on examining his options and determines the best tactics for his next open move against opponents.

The utility of *tanfīyeh* is apparent in several respects. First, it is a means through which factional or personal tension is reduced and agitation is lowered during intense intra-elite struggles. It is also a way of testing the ability of subordinates or colleagues to manage political struggle in the "absence" of the leader. Finally, it is a tool for self-preservation, whereby a clerical politician can presumably evade responsibility for making a decision whose consequences may not be favorable for him.

Aside from utilizing these specific, traditional behavioral elements in its collective *modus operandi*, the clerical establishment also employs several other historical approaches in its attempt to strengthen its popular appeal and widen its support bases. The first of these has to do with the Iranian society's need for charismatic leadership. More than 20 centuries of continuous existence have given Iran a rich and complex inheritance; charismatic leadership has endured centuries of political and social turmoil as one of the primary features of this heritage.

Acutely aware of this prerequisite for effective leadership, the Islamic authorities have spared no effort to present themselves as wise, pious and strong men who remain dedicated to the ideals of Islam and the revolution and who tolerate no excuses in serving the masses.

The clerical establishment's *modus operandi* is

⁶For the role of justice in Shia thought and Iranian history, see Said Amir Arjomand, "Religion, Political Action and Legitimate Domination in Shiite Iran," *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1979), pp. 59-109.

⁷The Persian proverb *zolm bel saviyeh adl ast* (oppression equally applied is justice) suggests that the purpose of a ruler's justice is to prevent citizens from gaining an advantage over one another, even if such justice requires applying harsh measures against the whole society.

also characterized by its concern and constant agitation for the theme of justice (*adl*). The belief in *adalat* or divine justice is central to Shiism. Justice also has a special meaning for Iranians because it is in ancient ideal inherited from their pre-Islamic culture as well as an overriding theme in Persian literature and folklore.⁶ Justice has little to do with the Western notion of individual freedom. Instead, *adl* is meant to preserve order in society. Credible justice has to be rapid and visible.⁷

In view of these popular precepts, the clerical network has tried to present the "administration of justice" as an integral feature of its rule. Indeed, as a part of their political strategy, the clerics have developed and utilized this theme in a variety of situations. For example, they have sought to mesmerize the poor masses of practicing Shia believers by constant agitation around the theme of Islamic social justice; in the process, they have successfully co-opted leftist ideas and programs. In the same manner, the Shia clerics justify their offensive against "evil and satanic" outside forces and their "domestic lackeys" in the name of an all-out Islamic struggle for justice.

Finally, an integral part of the clerics' general management pattern is illustrated by their passionate preoccupation with ideological-religious indoctrination, conformity and political repression. The effort to indoctrinate the population is conducted not only in the sense of teaching Islamic religious dogmas and Khomeini's political ideology; it is also carried out in the broader sense of inculcating new social and cultural norms. For this purpose, the clerics have required the government to place all its available resources at their disposal.

The clerical system in Iran is far more complex, flexible and resilient than might be expected. The network's inner logic, shaped by historical experience and religious custom, is sound, and its principles of government and public management are essentially compatible with one another. At the same time, these principles are agreeable to the thinking, lifestyles, tastes and preferences of the masses of practicing Shia Iranians and exhibit a profound sense of continuity with that country's long history. This is not meant to imply that the clerical rulers of Iran are united in their pursuit of Islamic goals or that they lack deep-seated personal or other divisions. On the contrary, elite factionalism and often violent conflicts have been a reality of this network's existence since its birth.

CLERICAL FACTIONALISM

As it stands today, the ruling post-Khomeini clerical leadership is far from being a monolithic whole. Despite their basic commitment to Islam and the revolution, the clerical leaders often dem-

onstrate contradictory attitudes and hold opposing viewpoints. The usual Western tendency to describe Iranian political players or factional groups in terms of "liberal," "rightist," or "fundamentalist" is clearly inadequate. Instead of reflecting the realities of Iran's political scene, these concepts reflect the West's drive for the discovery of straight lines in a society where only the Eastern world of Arabesques prevails.

Although clerical factions exist, labeling them is difficult because of the fluidity of the clerical network and the elusive nature of the factions. This difficulty is further compounded by the dispersion of factions within many government and revolutionary organs and the subtlety of the manner of argumentation among various groups. Similarly, the boundaries of each faction are often not clearly identifiable because, in the Iranian political context, individuals are largely free to change allegiances over time, depending on circumstances. Furthermore, it has been common for a high-ranking cleric to speak one way and to act in another way. Another complication involves the ingrained tendency of clerical leaders to mask their individuality behind a public show of unanimity.

In assessing the various episodes and instances of political struggles among the ruling Shia clerics, it is possible to distinguish at least two types of factional conflicts: personal discords among many middle-level clerical politicians and their junior civilian partners within and between broad clerical coalitions; and competition between "insiders" (the court clerics) and "outsiders" (the independent clerics). Each of these conflicts differs from the others in terms of political significance, intensity, limitations and policy consequences.⁸

The almost nonstop infighting waged by many clerical politicians against one another has been a major characteristic of Iran's theocratic regime. This type of conflict often cuts across political or ideological lines and pits individual clerics or cliques against one another for no apparent reason other than personal disagreements. In this type of conflict, the major players are mostly middle- to lower-level clerics together with some of their bureaucratic and technocratic subordinates. These politicians are widely scattered among various government ministries, revolutionary organizations and provincial and local administrative organs. Many have great authority among their supporters and enjoy a large degree of freedom in their posts. The mostly young, ambitious and

energetic clerics are loyal supporters of the regime. In addition, the middle-level and low-ranked clerics exercise shared and delegated power and constantly seek to develop access to high-ranking clerics.

There are many reasons for the emergence and prevalence of largely personal conflicts within the clerical network. For example, it should be remembered that in the Islamic Republic no single ministry or state organ is charged with carrying out any major political, ideological or socioeconomic task considered important enough by the clerical network. Instead, agencies with parallel and often overlapping responsibilities and functions perform these tasks. Moreover, the strength and practical day-to-day influence of many responsible clerical officials often do not correspond directly to their positions. Instead, their power appears to correspond directly to the degree of access they have—through kinship or other personal ties—to leading clerics.

This type of environment inevitably leads to the prominence of personal ties and personality issues as important bases for the formation of factional coalitions. The fluid situation has several other implications. For one, since every socially relevant issue among the clerics must be defined in broad religious terms, factional outbursts of a personal nature often acquire religious and political coloring and are fought out under religious cloaks, further dividing cleric from cleric. Finally, conflicts of this nature often mystify and confuse foreign observers and publications; unwittingly reading too much into such discords, they may forecast the imminent collapse of old coalitions or herald the emergence of new alignments within the clerical establishment. This further confuses foreign decision-makers about internal political developments in Iran.

The second general type of intra-elite factionalism revolves around the almost constant strife between those clerics who have become an integral part of the formal government apparatus and those who operate outside it. Members of the first group, referred to as "insiders," are found at all levels of Iranian bureaucracy: central, provincial and local. As salaried government officials, they are strongest in the executive branch. Their weight and influence are also felt in descending order within the legislative and judicial branches of government. The second category of clerics, referred to as "out-

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⁸For a detailed discussion of intra-elite discords and specific political and ideological coalitions among Iran's ruling clerics, consult Nikola B. Schahgaldian, *The Clerical Establishment* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, June, 1989), pp. 35-82.

Nikola B. Schahgaldian has written two books on modern Iranian politics: *The Iranian Military under the Islamic Republic* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 1987) and *The Clerical Establishment in Iran* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 1989).

In Egypt, in the 1980's "a decade of dramatic political change. . . . encouraged hope that under Mubarak a true pluralism might emerge. At present, the process appears to have run awry. Despite a stated commitment to democratic reform, the Mubarak government refuses to grant real legitimacy to the establishment-oriented opposition that is a vigorous counter to state power."

Political Opposition in Egypt

By JOEL GORDON

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A huge battle is raging on a broad front between the security organs and the groups of extremism and terrorism," Egypt's Interior Minister Zaki Badr told the People's Assembly in a heated session in February, 1989.¹ Similar statements by other security chiefs and state officials underscore the seriousness with which the government of President Hosni Mubarak regards the recent proliferation of militant dissent throughout Egypt. The interior minister has repeatedly proclaimed his willingness to repay violence in kind.

I no longer care if somebody says the Interior Minister is violent, a terrorist and without conscience. Let them say whatever they want. I say that the solution to all terrorists is to strike hard at them.²

Under emergency measures instituted after President Anwar Sadat's assassination in October, 1981, later renewed and strengthened, Badr's police have detained on suspicion thousands of "extremists"—Islamic radicals, Communists, Nasserists and "Khomeinists"—most of whom have never been charged.

Umar Abd Rahman, imam of a mosque in the Fayum, the oasis city southwest of Cairo, acknowledges that he is a "terrorist and zealot on behalf of God."³ Abd Rahman is the most vocal leader of the radical Islamist trend in Egypt. His Friday sermons, and those of other activist imams, frequently turn into antigovernment demonstrations and confrontations with the police. In April, 1989, security police clashed with 400 worshipers and then arrested Abd Rahman. Several weeks later, on the eve of Ramadan, authorities detained between 1,500 and 2,000 suspected Islamic activists and put more than 100 sites under heavy guard.

A sense of unease at the top is matched by a

¹*Al-Akhbar* (Cairo), February 21, 1989, in Foreign Broadcast and Information Service, *Near East and South Asia Daily Report* (hereafter cited as FBIS), March 1, 1989.

²*Al-Anba* (Kuwait), January 28, 1989, in FBIS, February 2, 1989.

³*Al-Watan* (Kuwait), February 23, 1989, in FBIS, March 6, 1989.

growing malaise throughout Egypt, where the mosque is the primary (but not sole) center of militant dissent. One of the sites placed under guard in April, the Adam mosque in Cairo's Ayn Shams district, had been seized by authorities the previous December, after a police officer was allegedly stabbed to death by Muslim extremists. Such acts of violence are still rare, but they punctuate more common incidents of harassment of Egyptian citizens and open defiance of the state.

They also challenge an establishment-oriented opposition to reassert its commitment to reform within the political process. At their most extreme, radical groups have made attempts on the lives of political figures and foreign diplomats. In September, 1989, a tribunal sentenced to death five members of the Islamist Saved From Hell group for 1987 attempts on the lives of two former interior ministers and a prominent editor. The case of Egypt's Nasserist Revolution, the group charged with killing two Israeli officials and wounding two Americans between 1984 and 1987 and linked to Khalid Abdel Nasser, son of the late Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, finally came to trial in 1989 a full year after indictments were handed down. Perpetrators of these acts defended their legitimacy and found no lack of support among the establishment opposition.

In a charged political atmosphere, where both the interior minister and a radical imam proclaim not only each other but themselves "terrorists," responsibility for violence has become a focal point of discourse. At the heart of the matter are the issues of democratization, government accountability and, ultimately, faith in the political process. Opponents of the regime accuse the government of provoking militancy, then hiding behind the emergency decrees. The government insists that Egypt is progressing down the path to democracy, but it reiterates the need for a strong hand to curb elements that would overturn the very institutions the government seeks to reform. It accuses the opposition of abetting violence by raising questions of civil

liberties and challenging the emergency decrees.

President Mubarak, the state-run media and religious leaders stress moderation, morality, compromise and education. The dominant language of government spokespersons, however, has become marked by confrontation. The government, which once hoped to foster a parliamentary opposition as a political center and as an acceptable alternative to the anti-establishment, now seems intent on pushing the center to the fringes and into the arms of radicals.

Three individuals, none of whom sit in Parliament, personify the escalating discourse of confrontation. Interior Minister Badr represents the harsh side of a regime that has of late struggled to balance carrot and stick; Umar Abd Rahman and Khalid Abdel Nasser stand at opposite poles of the anti-establishment, radical Islamism and militant Nasserism. Between the government and the radical opposition, a vocal but powerless parliamentary center, once apparently on the verge of attaining bona fide legitimacy, grows increasingly ambivalent about a political process that appears to have stalled on the path toward democracy.

STATE AND OPPOSITION

The changes in Egyptian political life since Mubarak's ascension to power have been dramatic. Following Sadat's hesitant steps toward pluralism, the Mubarak government permitted the certification of a variety of opposition parties. Those that contested elections in 1984 and 1987, the freest in three decades (despite charges of fraud and intimidation), represented true alternatives to the ruling National Democratic party (NDP) headed by Mubarak. In 1987, opposition parties captured 95 of the 448 seats in Parliament.⁴

Mubarak has allowed a lively opposition press to emerge, which quickly gained wide readership. The quality of coverage is mixed; it is often argued that the government has shrewdly exploited lax standards and a tendency toward sensationalism to deflate the credibility of opposition journals. Nonetheless, because the state-run media is so limited in coverage, those who want news—or rumors—of opposition activities, financial scandals, price rises and public disturbances are forced to turn elsewhere, irrespective of political affiliation.⁵

⁴For the elections, see Erika Post, "Egypt's Elections" and Bertus Hendriks, "Egypt's New Political Map," *Middle East Report*, July-August, 1987, pp. 17-22, 23-30.

⁵Robert Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 193-197.

⁶*Al-Wafd* (Cairo), January 9, 1989, in FBIS, January 11, 1989.

⁷In 1989, a U.S. congressional report and Amnesty International both cited consistent use of torture by security officials. See *The New York Times*, May 11, 1989.

The parliamentary opposition represents diverse ideological and political traditions. The unofficial leader of the opposition is the Muslim Brotherhood. Still not a legal political party, the Brotherhood has been allowed to contest elections in alliance with certified parties. An alliance in 1987 between the Brothers, the Socialist Labor party (SLP) and the tiny Liberal party captured 17 percent of the vote, 56 seats (60 after the assignment of 4 of 48 appointed seats). Although SLP president Ibrahim Shukri is the official leader of the alliance, the Brothers are the dominant faction, controlling 38 seats to the SLP's 16 and the Liberals' 6.

The Wafd, the reconstituted majority party of the parliamentary era (1924-1953), holds 35 seats, making it the second largest opposition bloc in Parliament. The Wafd differs minimally with the Mubarak government in economic and foreign policies and should represent the ideal loyal opposition. Allied with the Muslim Brothers in 1984, a stratagem that probably cost the party as many votes as it gained, the Wafd has reasserted its traditional secular posture. Shut out of Parliament twice because it failed to win 8 percent of the vote, the National Progressive Union party (NPUP), a broad coalition of Marxists, Nasserists and social democrats, remains a leading voice in opposition circles. Other small parties have been formed, but play no significant role in the opposition.

Despite fundamental ideological differences, the parliamentary opposition speaks with one voice on issues of democratization and civil liberties. It challenges the legality of the 1984 election law, restricting representation to parties that win at least 8 percent of the national vote. In January, 1989, opposition deputies proposed revised guidelines for electoral reform that included supervision of elections by the judiciary, the cancellation of current voter lists, and the redivision of constituencies "along objective lines."⁶ They have sustained an offensive against the emergency measures, leveling charges of wiretapping, torture and corruption—charges that the government denies vociferously but not always convincingly.⁷

The state continues to treat parliamentary foes as pariahs. On occasion Mubarak will meet with opposition leaders, but they remain virtual nonentities to the government-run media. In Parliament, where the NDP commands an automatic two-thirds majority, opposition deputies have been relegated to an honorary back bench. Speaker Rifat Mahgub, who wields a heavy gavel, ranks second only to Zaki Badr as a target of the nonstate press. Since assuming the post in 1984, Mahgub has presided over a decreasing number of issues debated, speeches made and votes taken by the People's Assembly. He prematurely closed the 1986 session against opposi-

tion outcry.⁸ Matters have not improved since, and the 1989 session was tainted by a brawl between opposition delegates and Zaki Badr.

ZAKI BADR

No government figure represents the discourse of confrontation better than the heavy-handed interior minister. The former governor of Asyut province in Upper Egypt, a hotbed of religious discord, Badr was appointed in the wake of the February, 1986, riots by Central Security Forces (CSF) conscripts. To quell the disturbances, Mubarak had been forced to turn to the army, a move that greatly enhanced the position of the then defense minister, Abd Halim Abu Ghazala. A month later, Mubarak charged Badr to rebuild the CSF, restore public confidence in it and, not least, restore its position as a bulwark against the influence of the military. Badr quickly thrust himself into the spotlight as Egypt's top cop, overseeing a full-scale shake-up of the CSF command. His position appears to have been strengthened by the "promotion" (to presidential assistant) last April of Abu Ghazala, his chief Cabinet rival who has been linked to illegal efforts to acquire American missile technology.⁹

Badr seems to relish his role as *bête noire* of the opposition. His predecessor, Ahmad Rushdi, in an effort to soften his office's image (which had been tarnished by charges of election-rigging and widespread torture), tried to establish a dialogue with the opposition and initiated a campaign to promote civic responsibility on Egypt's highways. Badr has shown little interest in negotiations, and often appears to ride roughshod over the law. He has used emergency powers to detain thousands of suspected activists, has challenged court orders to release political prisoners and at times has disobeyed the courts outright.

Badr has also taken on the parliamentary opposition. One consistent line dominates his rhetoric: by raising an outcry against the emergency decrees the opposition irresponsibly abets militancy. Badr plays on popular fears and apprehensions, citing

⁸Springborg, op. cit., pp. 191-193.

⁹For Abu Ghazala's uneasy relationship with Mubarak, see Springborg, op. cit., pp. 96-104, 118-125; for Badr's rise, pp. 148-152.

¹⁰See his statement cited in *Al-Anba*, January 28, 1989, in FBIS, February 2, 1989.

¹¹The following day, Prime Minister Atif Sidqi discounted the specific charges that sparked the melee. For Badr's speech and an account of the melee, see *Al-Akhbar*, February 21, 1989, in FBIS, March 1, 1989.

¹²See the interview with Cairo Security Chief Mamduh Bari, in *Al-Majalla* (London), January 18-24, 1989, in FBIS, January 30, 1989.

¹³For example, see statements by the governor of Minya, Abd Tawwab Rashwan, in *Al-Nur* (Cairo), February 15, 1989, in FBIS, March 23, 1989.

Iranian and Libyan connections, and denounces the Muslim Brotherhood as the source of all dissent in Egypt, whether it be religious or secular.¹⁰

In February, 1989, Badr took his campaign directly to the People's Assembly. After hearing opposition deputies—speaker Mahgub termed their complaints “disgusting obscenities”—Badr defended his forward policy against dissidents. He derided the opposition for its hostility, directing his ire primarily against the Wafdists, whose newspaper had recently printed photographs of purported torture victims. Badr accused the editors of deliberate fabrication in this instance and denounced several Wafd leaders for accepting bribes from Islamic investment companies. When he mentioned party boss Fuad Sirag Din by name, a Wafdist deputy stormed the rostrum, sparking a free-for-all. Speaker Mahgub restored order, gained a vote of confidence in Badr and his policies, and adjourned the meeting.¹¹

The assault on the parliamentary opposition may create more problems than it solves. The opposition is never so united as when it is attacked, and it responds with increasing vigor in its press and public forums. The government further alienates opposition supporters, a significant minority of the electorate, and NDP deputies have shown decreasing tolerance for Badr's tactics. Finally, despite Badr's offensive posture, designed to reassure the public, his constant references to political extremism may instead foster a sense among Egyptians that their government is besieged and unable to confront the forces of radicalism. When the parliamentary opposition is included in the extremist camp, belief in the government is further strained.

The government remains open to charges that it tacitly preserves a degree of disorder in order to justify retaining the emergency measures. Despite bold claims to root out extremists, security actions are apparently more reactive than preemptive, and security officials often seem slow to act. After the police crackdown in Ayn Shams, authorities were hard-pressed to answer questions not only about police provocation but also about their long delay.¹² More curious, the government allowed Umar Abd Rahman to preach openly until April, although it labels him the spiritual guide of the radical Jihad movement.

The very question of state-sponsored violence is also difficult. It is one thing to talk dutifully of force, another to proclaim oneself a “terrorist” on behalf of law and order, and still another to boast of storming mosques, albeit mosques in which illegal activities are organized. Popular sensitivities are undoubtedly disturbed by the expressed zeal of those entrusted with public security.¹³ That the government recognizes that it may be guilty of media overkill is indi-

cated by the emphasis Badr and other security chiefs have placed in recent statements on their other concerns: combating white-collar crime, black marketeering and drug trafficking.

The regime has also marshalled religious authorities, the *ulema*, to defend its legitimacy and to condemn militant opposition as contrary to Islam. After the crackdown in Ayn Shams, three leading religious scholars issued a statement endorsing the government's position. They rejected charges made by radical Islamists that Egypt is an infidel or apostate nation, and denounced the radicals for claiming the right to judge the piety of others, a matter for God alone to determine. Yet each of these scholars has also felt compelled to deny publicly charges that he is a servant of the state. Muhammad Ghazali, a prominent Muslim Brother, blamed the state for fostering the radicalization of the Islamist trend.¹⁴

UMAR ABD RAHMAN

Umar Abd Rahman, the blind imam whom the government describes as the spiritual leader of Jihad, personifies the growing boldness of the radical trend. A graduate of the Azhar seminary and a former theology professor of its Asyut branch, Abd Rahman is a seasoned activist with an arrest record dating back to 1969. The government indicted him for having defined Jihad's religious justification for the Sadat killing and the subsequent uprising in Asyut. He was tried and acquitted for lack of direct evidence, although the court found his preaching subversive and his beliefs not incompatible with assassination or insurrection. He was rearrested in 1986 and held without charges despite a court order for his release. By last year he was again free and preaching in the Fayum.¹⁵

In recent public pronouncements, Abd Rahman has refrained from explicitly sanctioning militant action against either the state, the "apostate" Muslims or the Coptic community. When pressed, he has renounced specific acts of violence, like the killing of a policeman in Ayn Shams, but he blames security forces for provoking the opposition. He denounces the *ulema* as puppets of the regime and denies the legitimacy of all government-administered mosques, especially Azhar, which he derides

¹⁴*Al-Akhbar*, January 2, 1989, in FBIS, January 19, 1989, and January 24, 1989; *Al-Shab* (Cairo), January 10, 1989, in FBIS, January 23, 1989.

¹⁵For Abd Rahman's career, see A. Chris Eccel, "Alim and Mujahid in Egypt: Orthodoxy Versus Subculture, or Division of Labor," *The Muslim World*, vol. 78 (July/October, 1988), pp. 205-206; Springborg, op. cit., p. 152.

¹⁶See interviews in *Al-Ahram* (Cairo), January 16, 1989, in FBIS, January 24, 1989; *Al-Watan*, February 23, 1989, in FBIS, March 6, 1989.

¹⁷*Al-Watan*, February 9, 1989, in FBIS, February 15, 1989.

for kowtowing to the state and opening its doors to "naked" tourists. He refrains from leveling charges of impiety on individuals, even those who work in the state bureaucracy, but he denounces those who await patiently the implementation of Islamic law, asserting that those who stand idle while the Sharia is flouted are no better than unbelievers.¹⁶

In recent years, Abd Rahman, Hafiz Salama and other outspoken imams have led radical Islamist movements out of the underground to challenge the state more openly. This seems to be the result of both their increased confidence and their growing numbers. In addition to large turnouts to hear Friday sermons, these movements have grown bolder in confronting those whom they deem improperly dressed or engaged in improper behavior, particularly on university campuses. Parties where there is dancing and where alcoholic beverages are served have been disrupted; casual encounters between men and women on the streets elicit harassment. Video shops have been vandalized and so have bars and liquor stores, more traditional targets. Inter-confessional tensions remain high in Upper Egyptian cities, where the Coptic population is large. The leader of an Islamist society in Minya defended the fire-bombing of a Coptic church as a result of Muslim resentment against "increasingly provocative" church activities and the unwillingness of authorities to preserve a balance between Christian and Muslim rights.¹⁷

MOVEMENT MAKEUP

The Islamist movement still appears to be comprised of locally based groups that are loosely connected. Estimates of active membership in radical groups vary widely. Egyptian government sources cite 3,000 as a working number. The passive following is no doubt much higher. The latter presumably includes many who support the Muslim Brotherhood in elections but are sympathetic to those who have lost patience with the pace of reform.

The extent to which the Brotherhood may be linked to radical movements is hotly debated. Some observers, recalling the Brothers' history of hostility toward party politics and their propensity for violence in the late 1940's, see their participation in Parliament as a public facade to mask support for a militant underground. Others argue that the movement has always been led by establishment-oriented political conservatives. Although they rejected the parliamentary system before 1952, and although the repression of the Nasser years fostered a generation of young activists who broke away to

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Joel Gordon is completing a book on the origins and consolidation of Nasserist rule in Egypt.

"The seemingly glacial progress [toward peace] reflects deep divisions in the Israeli political system regarding ends and means. . . . It is unlikely that Israeli hesitation can be eliminated until there is a consensus within Israel that the PLO . . . has changed fundamentally."

Israel's Continuing Dilemma

BY HAROLD M. WALLER

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As in most of the years since its birth in 1948, in 1989 Israel was preoccupied with issues of war and peace, foreign policy, relations with the Arabs and, in broad terms, its own future. "Normality" seemed as elusive as ever. Dramatic changes on the ground and in the world of diplomacy confronted Israel with problems and challenges that it seemed ill-prepared to face. The difficulties of developing policies under these circumstances were compounded by the sharp divisions within the "national unity" government. The resulting strategy may have seemed dilatory, but it had the virtue of postponing a divisive and bitter political battle over how to approach negotiations with the Palestinians, although it tended to exacerbate the relationship with the United States, Israel's main ally.

Many assumptions that Israel had accepted in formulating policy during the past two decades were called into question. Among these were its ability to control the territories occupied in the course of the 1967 Six-Day War, Judea and Samaria (or the West Bank), and the Gaza Strip; its conviction that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was unalterably opposed to Israel's very existence and hopelessly wedded to terrorism; and its belief that in the crunch the United States could be persuaded to see things from Israel's perspective. The Palestinian uprising and the PLO diplomatic initiative late in 1988 undermined the first two assumptions and pushed the United States in directions that worried some Israelis.

As Israel wound up its election campaign on November 1, 1988, and entered a six-week period of politicking in the effort to construct a new coalition government, there were major changes on the diplomatic front. Given its preoccupation with politics, the government did not appear ready to cope with the fallout from the Algiers meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC) in November, or PLO chairman Yasir Arafat's Stockholm and Geneva declarations in December. These dramatic events

were made possible by the inability of Israel to put down the intifada, the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza that began in December, 1987.

The defiant example of the rebels prodded the Palestinian leadership outside the territories into action in order to capitalize on the gains already realized by growing sympathy for the Palestinian cause. The PLO leadership also calculated that one of the reactions to the uprising in Israel would be that the Israelis would be more amenable to territorial compromise, a view validated by survey data.¹ With Israel on the defensive, the moment was propitious for an initiative that would make the PLO appear to be more moderate and reasonable.

In reality, Israel recognized that unless it was able to suppress the intifada, its strategic situation would be changed fundamentally. For 20 years, maintaining the status quo of the occupation may not have appeared to be ideal, but it did seem to be practical. Moreover, it was assumed in Israel that the occupation could be continued indefinitely without jeopardizing any vital interests. As the uprising continued, Israelis began to realize that the occupation might become too heavy a burden and too difficult a complication for foreign policy. This stimulated some rethinking of positions, especially within the Labor party. The government also realized that the strength of Israel's negotiating position was being undermined.

As long as Israel retained tight control over the territories, the Arabs might be persuaded to conclude an acceptable deal. But if Israel's hold on the territories weakened, the Arabs might assume that ultimately Israel would have to come to them on more favorable terms. Therefore, the intifada had a paradoxical effect. The Arabs believed that time was on their side and that the Israeli policy had not succeeded. At the same time the Arabs, particularly the PLO, were being pressed to take immediate action to win the maximum short-term advantage.

In November, 1988, the PLO grabbed the diplomatic initiative by proclaiming a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza and reformulating its general position vis-à-vis Israel; Arafat later

¹Hanoch Smith, "The 1988 Knesset Elections: A Victory for the Right and Religious Parties," a report published by the American Jewish Committee, November, 1988, p. 5.

described the new policy as recognition. Arafat's subsequent clarification, after much prodding from the United States government and the five American Jews with whom he met in Stockholm, gave the United States the long-awaited opening to begin a formal dialogue with the PLO. All this dismayed Israel, which was skeptical about the purported changes in PLO objectives and was deeply concerned about the implications of the United States involvement with the PLO. The ensuing divergence between United States and Israeli positions put a strain on the bilateral relationship and accentuated the feeling of isolation in Israel.² But it also forced the government to come up with an initiative of its own to maintain the possibility of diplomatic progress.

The key problem faced by the government in undertaking a direction was the difficulty of reconciling the positions of the two main partners in the national unity government. The dominant Likud party of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was reluctant to move ahead with any plan that might lead to territorial compromise, whereas Finance Minister Shimon Peres's Labor party had long been prepared to consider some trade of territory if there were a possibility of genuine peace.³ Hence, the challenge of producing a plan that both parties could accept was formidable. But by the spring of 1989, it was clear that Israel had to act, partly to satisfy the United States and partly to satisfy those elements in the Israeli population who were convinced that the status quo was no longer tolerable.

The moving forces behind the plan that finally emerged were Shamir and Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin of the Labor party. Both agreed that the focus of the next diplomatic step would be to allow the Palestinians of the occupied territories to elect representatives who would negotiate with Israel the establishment of an autonomous regime to remain in place until a final settlement of the issue. There was some debate in Israel as to whether the plan was a device to buy time or a genuine attempt to revive the Camp David process.

An underlying theme in 1989 was Israeli concern about the intentions of the United States government. Israelis were well aware that in the first year of a new administration, pressure is often applied to Israel.⁴ Especially after what were seen as generally

friendly relations with President Ronald Reagan, the administration of President George Bush appeared to be problematic. United States Secretary of State James Baker was regarded with apprehension because Israelis did not know him. The deteriorating political situation because of the intifada compounded the problem. Indicative of the perceived coolness of the American attitude was the long delay before the Bush administration invited Shamir to visit President Bush during his November, 1989, trip to the United States.

The other bilateral relationship that was affected by the peace process was that with Egypt. Despite Israel's continuing efforts, the Egyptians remained cool toward Israel, although they offered to help to broker an agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. President Hosni Mubarak declined to meet Shamir, thereby expressing his displeasure at what he regarded as an unreasonably restrictive negotiating position even on procedural issues. However, Mubarak did meet Rabin in Cairo in September, 1989, in an effort to modify the existing Israeli proposal to make it acceptable to the Palestinians.

On another front, Israel made significant strides in improving its relations with the Soviet bloc and some third world countries like Kenya and Ethiopia. Full diplomatic relations with Hungary were restored and improvements were achieved in the status of relations with Poland and with the Soviet Union.

Israeli foreign policy continued to be unclear because of fundamental differences between Labor and Likud. Israel remained opposed to a new Palestinian state in the territories because such a state would constitute an unacceptable security threat. Negotiations with the PLO were ruled out because the PLO was regarded as a terrorist organization committed to Israel's destruction, notwithstanding Arafat's pronouncements. Therefore, the two major party leaders had to find a way to open Israeli-Palestinian negotiations without involving the PLO. It was understood that if substantive negotiations were to be undertaken, there probably would have to be new elections first, in order to enable the government to establish a position. Concentrating on the election of Palestinian representatives effectively postponed any Likud-Labor confrontation over policy. The challenge that the government faced was how to proceed with the election initiative in a manner that would hold the coalition together, keep the Americans happy and at the same time offer a chance that Egypt and the Palestinian representatives would accept the proposal.

DOMESTIC POLITICS

The major development on the domestic scene was the 1988 election, which ended in virtually a

²The relationship has had many strains over the years. See Nadav Safran, *Israel: The Embattled Ally* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).

³The two main approaches are described in historical terms by Shmuel Sandler, "The Origins of the National and the Statist Traditions in the Zionist Foreign Policy," unpublished paper, July, 1988.

⁴The Washington dimension is analyzed exhaustively in Steven L. Spiegel, *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

dead heat between the two leading parties, with Likud leading Labor by one Knesset (Parliament) seat.⁵ But election returns made it clear that the potential allies of Likud were stronger than those of Labor. As a result, Likud was in the driver's seat in the attempt to form a government. To form a coalition with his potential allies, however, Shamir would have had to recruit almost all the small right-wing nationalist or Orthodox parties into a narrow coalition.⁶ That would have given those parties disproportionate bargaining power, both during the period of forming a government and during the life of the government. The religious parties were well aware of their position, especially because they were also potential coalition partners of Labor. As a result, the religious parties, the one camp that was noticeably stronger than it had been in the 1984 election (18 of the 120 seats compared with 13), made extreme demands that, if met, would have strained relations between Israel and American Jews.⁷ Thus the Orthodox parties overplayed their hand and forced the two major parties to ignore previous undertakings and establish a new national unity government with Shamir as Prime Minister. By keeping Rabin at the Defense Ministry, Shamir avoided having to elevate his Likud rival, Industry Minister Ariel Sharon, to that position, which made a unity government more attractive to him.

Although the religious parties were dismayed by this turn of events, they entered the government with little leverage, because the coalition was able to function without them. The nationalist parties on the right, the Arab parties and the Zionist parties to the left of Labor stayed out of the government. The mathematics of any coalition that did not involve both the two large parties were precarious, pro-

viding another impetus for the unity government.⁸ Despite that calculation and despite an agreement that neither of the major parties would break up the government without calling elections, Labor tried from time to time to court the religious parties to induce them to join a narrow coalition.

The intensity of the Labor effort seemed to vary with Labor's perception of Likud's stance on the issue of negotiations with the Arabs. If it appeared to Labor that Likud was not being sufficiently flexible, efforts to recruit the religious parties were stepped up. In fact, Labor was subordinate to Likud in the coalition, but it was afraid to disband the government and force new elections because the polls showed that Labor would lose more ground than it lost in 1988.⁹ On the other hand, the price Labor would have had to pay to the religious parties to persuade them to join or to remain in a narrow coalition was too high, and it was not clear that such a coalition could hold in any case. Therefore, despite constant grumbling from the Labor party's Knesset members, Labor maintained its somewhat uncomfortable partnership with Likud and Peres retained his shaky hold on the leadership.

Shamir was not comfortable either. His internal party opposition coalesced around the so-called Gang of Three—David Levy, Yitzhak Modai, and Ariel Sharon—all of whom were ministers. They focused on the government's plan for elections in the territories and in July convinced a majority of the party's central committee to impose additional conditions on its ministers with regard to the plan. This action was widely seen as a defeat for Shamir, who had wanted to keep his options open, as well as a death knell for his plan. However, Shamir managed to finesse the problem in the Cabinet without destroying his position within the party.

By late 1989, Shamir was still Israel's dominant politician. Although his image was not necessarily strong, time and again he proved his shrewdness in outwitting his political opponents. He engineered the formation of a national unity government at the end of 1988 and he overcame what had appeared to be a humiliating defeat by the Gang of Three in July, 1989. Peres, on the other hand, saw his stock decline because of Labor's disappointing election showing and Peres's inability to best Shamir in the subsequent political maneuvering. Moreover, he was overshadowed within his own party by Rabin's performance and Rabin's leadership role with regard to the elections plan and the effort to persuade Egypt and the Palestinians to accept it. Thus Rabin became the major challenger for Labor party leadership.

Sharon was probably the major challenger in Likud. Chafing at his relatively secondary role, he was instrumental in building intraparty opposition

⁵For a more complete discussion of the election, see Harold M. Waller, "The 1988 Israel Election: Proportional Representation with a Vengeance," *Middle East Review*, vol. 11, no. 4 (Summer, 1989), pp. 9-17.

⁶Some useful background information on the Orthodox parties is found in Yosseph Shilhav, "Religious Factors and Political Geography: Electoral Geography of 'Haredi' Jews in Israel," a paper presented to the International Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., August 30, 1988.

⁷An analysis of the development of the policy positions of the Orthodox parties is found in Charles Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Religion and Politics in Israel* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1984), especially pp. 79-137.

⁸If Likud tried to lead a coalition of the nationalist and religious parties, the policies of the government would be driven too far to the right from Shamir's perspective. If Labor tried to form a coalition with the religious parties, it would have to pay such a high price in terms of concessions to those parties that its putative leftist partners could not be part of the same government. Both types of coalitions would be hostage to their small members.

⁹One indication of the relative strength of the two main parties was Likud's general success in the municipal elections held in March, 1989.

to Shamir's leadership. His efforts were put on hold by his failure to follow through after his victory at the central committee, but he remained the most formidable successor to Shamir should there be a vacancy at the top.

THE UPRISING

When the second anniversary of the beginning of the uprising occurred in December, 1989, it was clear that the intifada had achieved an importance rivaling the Six-Day and Yom Kippur Wars, the Camp David Accords (and the peace treaty with Egypt) and the Lebanon War. In terms of its effect on the Israeli public, the intifada drove home the reality of the Palestinians' existence and their dissatisfaction with Israeli rule. The reality was perceived in two ways: as a threat that had to be contained and as a problem, the solution of which could no longer be shelved indefinitely.

Policy-makers, of course, were aware of the relationship between events in the territories and political considerations. Hence the reassertion of control over those events by the army became a prime objective. As the uprising continued, the army's difficulty in controlling the situation while minimizing violence and casualties became apparent and led to constant debate in Israel. The relative merits of different types of bullets—regular, rubber or plastic—became a key issue. In addition, army leaders expressed concern about the long-range effect on the morale and combat readiness of their troops. In time, the senior generals demonstrated that they could contain the uprising but could not eliminate it without turning to unacceptable tactics. This realization led to tension between the professional military men and the political leadership; the soldiers felt that they were being asked to resolve a political problem using military means. Implicitly, the military seemed to believe that ultimately the government would have to find a political solution.

In assessing the Israeli Defense Forces' (IDF) response to the uprising, the intimate connection between politics and military action is evident. Some of the participants in the intifada may have thought that their actions would make it impossible for Israel to continue the occupation but that has not been true. Nor has the IDF been able to reduce the violence to a level that would make it an inconsequential factor in the political equation. Rabin and the Army chief of staff, General Dan Shomron, have stressed the need for patience in the effort to wear down the Palestinians. The question for the politicians, however, was whether they had time to achieve that objective or whether the external (and possibly internal) pressures for an imprudent political initiative might become irresistible.

On the evidence, public opinion generally remained opposed to the PLO demand for a Palestinian state: more than 75 percent of those polled opposed that idea early in 1989. About the same proportion believed that such a state would endanger Israeli security. On the other hand, since the beginning of the uprising, there has been a modest increase in the percentage of respondents willing to contemplate territorial concessions, with about two-thirds willing to trade at least some land, and about one-third willing to negotiate with the PLO. Nevertheless, nearly 90 percent of all Israelis did not believe Arafat's declarations of late 1988.

From the perspective of the Israeli government, the most dangerous aspect of the uprising was the damage to Israel's image abroad, especially because of the death of several hundred Palestinians during the violence. Eventually, the stories from the territories became familiar and headlines in the foreign news media were captured by more pressing events, like developments in China or the countries of East and Central Europe. In addition, the PLO's failure to achieve its aims quickly promoted dissension in Palestinian ranks, just as it did among Israelis.

One indicator of internal strife among the Palestinians was the number of murders of fellow Palestinians under cover of the intifada. Over 100 such murders have been reported, usually justified on the grounds that the victim had in some way cooperated with Israel.

As 1989 drew to a close, the uprising was not winding down. But despite the steadily increasing casualty toll, its scope and intensity appeared to be lessening. The level had not been reduced sufficiently to eliminate the political consequences, but Israelis had learned to live with and cope with the violence, even when it intruded into pre-1967 Israel. Thus, the intifada has continued to provide the backdrop against which the maneuvering over the peace process has taken place.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Even though the primary focus of government policy during the year was the uprising and the peace process, serious problems developed on the economic front as well. The economy began to slow down, with a resulting rise in unemployment. In a country where unemployment has traditionally been relatively low, this became a serious issue. Unemployment among the Palestinian Arabs in the

(Continued on page 86)

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Lebanon continues to suffer "a permanent though low-profile conflict involving Lebanese, Syrians, Iranians, Palestinians, Israelis and United Nations forces."

Paralysis in Lebanon

BY ITAMAR RABINOVICH

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POLITICAL events in Lebanon during 1989 were governed by the failure to elect a successor to President Amin Gemayel in September, 1988. That failure resulted in a further exacerbation of the Lebanese crisis, drove the country closer to partition and led to a fierce round of fighting between Syria and the Christian-Maronite camp. Toward the end of 1989, a presidential successor, René Moawad, was elected. On November 22, the President-elect was assassinated in a car bomb explosion. A new President, Elias Hrawi, was elected on November 24, but his election did not stabilize the situation. At the end of November, the new President was seeking to impose his authority on the Maronite community and its armed forces and the militias, while Syria was preparing to invade and subdue Lebanon's autonomous Maronite territory.

The stalemate of September, 1988, was symptomatic of the larger paralysis in Lebanon. After 15 years of crisis, war and civil war, the Lebanese state and its political system had been reduced to a partial existence. The central government's authority was limited to a very small area, while most of the country was either under Syrian control or divided among several "autonomies": Christian-Maronite, Shiite and Druse, and the Israeli "security belt" under General Antoine Lahad's South Lebanon Army in the south.

Yet the framework of the state and its central institutions as well as Lebanon's "rump Parliament" were kept not only as symbols of lingering Lebanese entity and legitimacy, but as the basis for a prospective resurrection of the state. The precondition for such a resurrection had been a redefinition of the national consensus, but it was precisely on this issue that the two contending camps in Lebanese politics could not reach an agreement. The political reforms that the Muslim communities viewed as minimal were considered unacceptable by the effective leaders of the Maronite community.

Most of the Maronite community has been concentrated in East Beirut and in the autonomous

area east, northeast and north of the city. The Maronite leadership in that area (excluding Maronite politicians living in the areas under Syrian control or influence) consisted in 1988 of four elements:

- President Amin Gemayel and his entourage, which included part of the Kataeb (Phalangist) party and his own small militia;
- the Lebanese Forces militia under Samir Geagea, which was the effective government in the autonomous Maronite region;
- General Michel Aoun, the commander of the Lebanese army, who commanded six brigades numbering about 15,000 men;
- the Patriarch and several independent or unidentified leaders and politicians, who tended to take a softer line compared with the radical position normally held by the Lebanese Forces and General Aoun.¹

The Muslim communities based in East Beirut and in the areas of Shiite and Druse autonomy formed a still more heterogeneous camp, riddled with inter- and intra-communal rivalries and divided by divergent orientations toward Syria and toward other political issues.

In 1984, Syria reestablished the hegemony in Lebanon that had been shaken in 1982. In the mid-1980's, it took full advantage of this recovery and of the centrality and saliency of the Lebanese issue to enhance its regional position. But by 1987, Lebanon had once again become a Syrian liability as a result of several developments:

- the difficulties inherent in the tasks of keeping order and establishing a political settlement in the complex Lebanese arena;
- the limitations of Syria's freedom of action in Lebanon. While the importance of the American and Israeli constraints declined, the importance of Iranian influence increased and, in 1988, Iraq reappeared as an actor in Lebanon;
- the difficulty of building and maintaining a pro-Syrian coalition. The Shiite community has been divided into supporters of the pro-Syrian Amal and the pro-Iranian Hezbollah; the Amal has often proved to be the less effective ally. Syria's relations with the Sunni community have been bedeviled by its conflict with the Palestine Liberation

¹See William Harris, *The Christian Camp on the Eve of Lebanon's Presidential Elections* (Tel Aviv: The Dayan Center Occasional Paper Series, 1988).

Organization (PLO) which, in the Lebanese context, has acted and has been perceived as a Sunni force. (The Sunnis have no militia.)

- the general decline of the regime of Syrian President Hafez Assad. The Baath regime's economic difficulties and its inability to sustain casualties and the political costs of a full confrontation with its rivals in Lebanon seriously constrained its conduct in Lebanon in the late 1980's.

Against this background, in the summer of 1988 Syria tried to impose on Lebanon a staunchly pro-Syrian President—at first, Suleiman Franjeh and then (with American connivance) Michel Daher. Both attempts were foiled by Syria's Maronite opponents, who prevented members of Parliament living in the areas under their control from attending parliamentary sessions, thus denying a quorum.

Under these circumstances (and having failed to make his own deal with Syria), before he stepped down from the presidency Amin Gemayel appointed Michel Aoun as Prime Minister. Thus the Maronites' position at the head of the government was to be maintained.

The formation of Aoun's government drew Lebanon closer to the partition that had been avoided during the years of the protracted crisis. Under Gemayel, there had been a government headed by a Sunni Muslim—Salim Hoss. Hoss continued to view himself as the legitimate Prime Minister and viewed Aoun as an illegitimate pretender. With Syrian support, Hoss appointed a Muslim commander of the Lebanese army. Politicized and fragmented as the Lebanese army had been, it had remained a national institution, but after September, 1988, it split into two rival organizations.

The central bank, once perhaps the most solid national institution in Lebanon, also became a victim of the aggravated polarization. General Aoun, for instance, took the bank to task for having allocated money to "the other army's" budget.

Syria's failure to impose its candidate was immediately exploited by its Arab enemies and rivals. Iraq extended open political support to General Aoun and his government, and supplied money and arms to him and to the Lebanese Forces, the other pillar of the Maronite opposition to Damascus. For Aoun, Iraqi recognition of his government was an important legitimizing measure. Other Arab states headed by Saudi Arabia saw a golden opportunity to enhance their role and that of the Arab League in the Lebanese arena at the expense of Syria.

In the spring of 1989, a six-state Arab League committee launched still another effort to seek a solution to the Lebanese crisis. The committee held meetings with Lebanese religious and political

leaders in and outside Lebanon. It failed to make any progress, but its very activity was significant. Since October, 1976, Syria's hegemony in Lebanon has been exercised under a vague umbrella of an Arab endorsement. That endorsement, coupled with the notion (sustained or at least not dispelled by the successive Lebanese governments) that Syria's troops in Lebanon were there at Beirut's invitation, were important legitimizing elements in Assad's Lebanese policy. Earlier, he had invested considerable effort in warding off attempts made at the Arab summit conferences to reopen the Lebanese file. In 1988 and 1989, Assad's difficulties gave his Arab rivals further opportunities to interfere.

Aoun's new prominence led to a conflict between his army and the Lebanese Forces. The potential for that conflict had been apparent for some time. Aoun and his army and the Lebanese Forces had been competing for the role of the Maronite community's effective protector. Aoun's presidential ambitions, evident in 1986, marked him as a potentially dangerous rival. Amin Gemayel's disappearance from the scene removed an important insulating element; Aoun subsequently acquired an official political title and the Lebanese Forces took over Gemayel's private militia and the vestiges of his influence over the Kataeb party organization. On February 15, 1989, fighting broke out between Aoun's army and the Lebanese Forces. Aoun, who conducted his campaign in the name of Lebanese legitimacy, chose to focus his offensive on the Lebanese Forces' control of illegal private ports in Junieh and Beirut.

The phenomenon of illegal private ports had been a curious dimension of the Lebanese crisis almost from its inception. The collapse of state authority had led in the 1970's to the establishment of private ports along the Lebanese coast, which were used for arms shipments and to generate income for various parties and militias. After the 1976 invasion, it did not take long for Syrian army officers to become integrated into this network. Lebanon's private ports flourished largely because they serviced not only Lebanon's parallel economy but Syria's much larger economy. Aoun's bid to deprive the Lebanese Forces of their hold on the fifth basin of Beirut's port was designed to deprive them of a major source of income. As such, it was also supported by Salim Hoss's Muslim government.

But what appeared briefly to be a matter of inter-communal consensus soon turned into yet another bone of contention between the Muslims and the Christians. The attempt, at the end of February (joined by Hoss and his government) to extend the campaign and to bring under control Muslim private ports as well angered the Druse leader, Walid

Jumblat. The private ports south of Beirut provided the Druse community with revenues and with access to the outside world free of Syrian control. Jumblat wore several hats in March, 1989—he was a leader of his community, the head of a militia-cum-political party and the minister of transport and public works in the Hoss government. He retaliated by closing the crossing point between Beirut's port and the Christian area and by foiling Aoun's attempt to return some 150,000 Christian refugees (since September, 1983) to the Shouf area. The friction with Jumblat led to a particularly fierce round of Christian-Muslim fighting in mid-March.

The intra-Marionite clash between Aoun's army and the Lebanese Forces was matched on the other side of the dividing line by the intra-Shiite fighting between Amal and Hezbollah. Amal is a communal but secular political movement that seeks a large share of the Lebanese pie for the Shiite community and is politically allied to Syria. Hezbollah is a religious movement that seeks to transform Lebanon into a second Islamic republic. It is not only allied with Iran, but represents an extension of Iranian politics into Lebanon.

Amal and Hezbollah fought bitterly in 1988. That round of fighting ended in Amal's victory in southern Lebanon in April and Hezbollah's victory in the southern suburbs of Beirut in May. Fighting was renewed in January, 1989, focused on the village of Jubah near Sidon. With Syrian and Iranian mediation, a new agreement, based on slight concessions by Amal, was reached at the end of January.

WAR OF LIBERATION

On March 14, 1989, a new chapter in the history of the Lebanese crisis was opened when General Aoun announced that "a war of liberation" had been launched against Syria. As he stated in a news conference:

Following the indiscriminate bombardment of Lebanese territory by the Syrian occupation army, the Cabinet met to take the necessary measures to bring about the immediate withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon. We are now preparing these measures on local, regional and international levels.²

Aoun's decision was prompted by the most recent challenge to his authority and was facilitated by the promise of Iraqi support. The general's character and his tendency to resort swiftly to radical measures clearly played a role in his decision to present Hafez Assad with a challenge he was bound to view seriously. But underlying it all was a dilemma fam-

iliar to every Christian-Marionite leader in Lebanon since 1975.

Syria's hegemony was limited, but if it went unchallenged it was bound to be consolidated and expanded. In fact, this was the essence of Assad's policy in Lebanon: to avoid confrontation and to work slowly and patiently to grind down the opposition and to build Syria's position in Lebanon brick by brick. A Marionite-Christian leader would probably conclude that, if uninterrupted, Syria was bound to implement this strategy and gain complete control over Lebanon. One could easily reach the conclusion that the process had to be arrested, even at the price of a costly confrontation with Syria.

The confrontation was indeed costly. Throughout the spring and early summer, Syria's artillery pounded East Beirut and other parts of the Christian autonomous area, killing about 1,000 people, wounding many more, causing massive destruction and forcing a significant portion of the population to flee to southern Lebanon, Cyprus or nearby rural areas. If the Syrians expected to generate a popular rebellion against Aoun (who would be perceived as responsible for all this suffering), they were disappointed. Aoun encountered some criticism but, more significantly, a wave of popular support was generated for a man who, at least briefly, was seen as a popular anti-Syrian hero.

Aoun and his policies also won unexpected support in France. "France's historic ties with the Marionites" has become a meaningless phrase. In fact, since French President Charles de Gaulle's change of orientation in the Middle East, France has tended to veer toward Islam and Arab nationalism rather than relying on its traditional Catholic connections. It was thus surprising that a tide of pro-Marionite and anti-Syrian sentiment emerged in France. It began in right-wing circles, but acquired proportions that led Socialist President François Mitterrand to issue a supportive statement. French support was not a substitute for the loss of American support but, given France's international standing, it could not be ignored by Syria.

Of more direct bearing were the repercussions in the Arab world. The Lebanese issue was raised at the Casablanca Arab League summit in May, 1989. Syria succeeded in preempting an explicit anti-Syrian statement but was unable to prevent the formation of a more effective three-state committee (Morocco, Algeria and Saudi Arabia) to replace the original six-state committee that had been seeking a solution to the Lebanese crisis on behalf of the Arab League.

During the summer, Assad decided that he had to force a decision. A Syrian ground attack on the Christian autonomous area was not feasible for a

²Voice of Lebanon (in Arabic), March 14, 1989, quoted in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Near East/South Asia Daily Report* (hereafter cited as FBIS), March 15, 1989.

number of reasons—the fear of American and Israeli reaction to such a radical measure, the anticipated casualties, and the fear of domestic Syrian reaction to casualties and other difficulties in Lebanon. Assad therefore preferred to continue to intensify direct Syrian shelling with a ground attack by Syria's proxies, spearheaded by Jumblat's Druse militia. The main battle was fought in Suq al-Gharb, an arena familiar in earlier rounds of Maronite-Druse fighting. Suq al-Gharb is situated just east of Beirut and controls access to Baabda, the seat of Lebanon's President. On August 13, 1989, the Druse assault on Suq al-Gharb was broken.

THE TAIF CONFERENCE

It was against this background that the three-state Arab commission was finally able to arrange a cease-fire (August 29) and to organize the unusual Taif conference in Saudi Arabia (September 30–October 22, 1989). The Saudis managed to bring their political and financial influence to bear on most of Lebanon's surviving Parliament members, convincing them to come to Taif to discuss (and endorse) the political reforms that might finally lead to a solution of the Lebanese crisis. They were also able to obtain Syria's cooperation.

Syria found itself in an awkward corner. It resented Arab interference in what Damascus preferred to view as a Syrian preserve and was criticized from the wings by Iran. The Iranians invited Jumblat and Amal's leader, Nabih Berri, to Tehran during the Taif conference in order to embarrass Damascus and to display their displeasure with the fact that their Syrian allies were willing to cooperate with their Saudi foes. But in the event, Syria's decision paid off. An agreement was reached in Taif, and it reflected Saudi-Sunni achievements.

On October 23, 1989, Lebanon's Parliament met for an eleventh closed session in Taif and approved the text of the Lebanese National Reconciliation Charter.³ The reforms were not far-reaching—the number of parliamentary deputies was increased from 99 to 108 and divided evenly between Christians and Muslims (in contrast to the 6:5 proportion favoring the Christians). The power of the Maronite President was to be reduced, while the power of the Sunni Prime Minister was to be increased. Political secularism was to be abolished over time. The charter contained a long list of additional principles and specific reforms.

Two groups in Lebanon were displeased with the document and with the broader political trends it represented. Hezbollah and other radical Shiites argued that the reforms were too moderate. Moder-

ate reforms suited the Sunnis, but the Shiites hoped for radical reforms. Michel Aoun resented the reforms, criticizing the concessions made by the Christians as well as the gains made by Syria. Syria, indeed, succeeded in turning a serious challenge to its position in Lebanon to its advantage. It drove a wedge between Aoun and the moderate Maronites and capitalized on the tension between Aoun and the Lebanese Forces. It also secured a paragraph in the document, under the title "Lebanese-Syrian Relations," that stated:

Lebanon, which is of Arab identity and belonging, is linked by sincere fraternal relations with all countries. There are special [literally, distinguished] relations which draw their strength from the roots of neighborhood, history and joint strategic interests between Lebanon and Syria. This concept is the base of coordination and cooperation between the two countries and it will be manifested by joint treaties in all fields, which will serve the two sister countries within the framework of mutual independence and sovereignty.⁴

Syria took advantage of the momentum created in Taif and encouraged the Lebanese Parliament to elect (this time in Lebanon) a new President—René Moawad, a Maronite politician from Zughartá, Suleiman Franjeh's home town. Moawad was a scion of one of Zughartá's five leading Maronite families. Politically, he was identified with Franjeh's pro-Syrian political orientation. But he was not perceived as an outright Syrian proxy and he maintained enough links with other wings of the Maronite political spectrum to make him a palatable President.

The fact that (unlike September, 1988) a quorum could be guaranteed, and the participation of Georges Saadee, the Kataeb's leader, indicated that the Lebanese Forces had decided to go along with the Syrian move. The rivalry with Aoun overshadowed all other considerations, at least temporarily. Moawad's election was also acceptable to the United States. This was hardly surprising, given the fact that the United States had been willing, 14 months earlier, to accept Michel Daher as a presidential candidate. A solution or stabilization of the Lebanese crisis based on Syrian hegemony and limited political reform was acceptable to United States President George Bush's administration.

(Continued on page 89)

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³Riyad Domestic Service (in Arabic), October 23, 1989, quoted in FBIS, October 24, 1989.

⁴Ibid.

BOOK REVIEWS

ON THE MIDDLE EAST

FROM BEIRUT TO JERUSALEM. *By Thomas L. Friedman.* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1989. 509 pages, acknowledgments, chronology and index, \$22.95.)

Thomas Friedman offers readers a vivid picture of his life as a foreign correspondent for *The New York Times*, first in Beirut and, later, in Jerusalem. This is journalism at its best—observant, objective and sensitive. The violence that has torn Lebanon apart has been reported in the American press almost daily and perhaps most American readers have grown indifferent to that faraway chaos. But this is a first-hand account of life under the guns, of the guerrilla terror that never ends, of the “Hama rules” that characterize the struggle in the Middle East, and the dangerous miscalculations of Israeli and American diplomats who do not understand the primitive tribal nature of the Lebanese dilemma and who see the conflict from a Western view.

Friedman’s years in Beirut helped to prepare him for his subsequent experiences in Israel. Already disillusioned by the actions of the Israeli military in Lebanon, the author was still apparently unprepared for the Israeli misperception of the Palestinians, why they initiated the intifada and why they continue to support it. As he sees it, “the Palestinian intifada set off an equally intense explosion of rage on the Israeli side. . . .” partly because the Israelis cannot understand the Palestinians’ smoldering resentment. The intifada threatens Israel “because it makes the Palestinians’ massive demographic weight into real political weight.”

Friedman concludes with perhaps too optimistic a view of the role that the United States can play in the Middle East: “America can be a bridge builder.” This may or may not be true; Friedman after all sees Lebanon and Israel through American eyes. In any event, Americans can learn a great deal about the problems and the stakes in the Middle East in this absorbing study.

Carol L. Thompson

MIDDLE EAST CONTEMPORARY SURVEY: VOLUME XI, 1987. *Edited by Itamar Rubinovich and Haim Shaked.* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989. 710 pages, list of initials and acronyms, maps, tables, list of sources and index, \$89.50.)

An annual record of political developments in the Middle East, *The Middle East Contemporary Survey* is written mostly by members of the Shiloah Institute of the Moshe Dayan Center at Tel Aviv University. This volume chronicles the events of January, 1987, through December, 1987; the editors have discontinued the sections on the economies and armed forces of individual countries, citing extensive coverage of the topics in other detailed surveys.

As in other volumes, the survey is divided into two sections. The first section discusses broad regional issues and the relationship between the Middle East and other global regions. Among topics discussed are the Middle East peace process, inter-Arab relations, the Iran-Iraq war, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, Middle East oil developments and Arab labor mobility.

The second section is a country-by-country analysis of the Middle East, with coverage of domestic and foreign affairs provided for each nation. Maps, tables and lists of acronyms, initials and sources augment this detailed survey, which its publisher claims is “acknowledged as the standard reference work on events and trends in the region.”

R. Scott Bomboy

MUBARAK’S EGYPT: FRAGMENTATION OF THE POLITICAL ORDER. *By Robert Springborg.* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989. 307 pages and index, \$39.95.)

In *Mubarak’s Egypt: Fragmentation of the Political Order*, Robert Springborg discusses the central political dilemmas facing President Hosni Mubarak. Anwar Sadat’s successor is caught between a strong military and a fragmented middle class. Unlike Gamal Abdel Nasser and Sadat, Mubarak lacks the charisma to develop a personal following and is forced to balance the need for economic austerity against massive popular political demands.

Springborg predicts that Mubarak will have difficulty in maintaining this balancing act in view of the increasingly chaotic system of political control. But it is too early to say whether degeneration will force Egypt into the arms of the less Western-oriented Islamic conservatives or will lead to complete control by the military.

Debra E. Soled

SAUDI ARABIA: TECHNOCRATS IN A TRADITIONAL SOCIETY. *By Henry H. Albers.*

(New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1989. 230 pages and index, \$39.95.)

Part of the American University Studies series, *Saudi Arabia: Technocrats in a Traditional Society* recounts Henry H. Albers's experience as a management consultant in Saudi Arabia from 1975 to 1980. Albers focuses on the Saudi technocrats who form the professional leadership of Saudi government, industry, military and education. His story of the years he spent as dean of the College of Industrial Management at the King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals describes his acculturation to a non-Western society, where the assumptions about religion, human relationships and social deportment are often totally unfamiliar. Like many non-Western countries in the process of modernizing, Saudi Arabia has tried to introduce the technology of the West as it suits Saudi needs, but without adopting Western culture. This is evident in its strict adherence to Muslim religious and social codes. Although it is a somewhat dry anecdotal account, Alber's book provides a well-rounded picture of West encountering East. D.E.S.

BAHRAIN: THE MODERNIZATION OF AUTOCRACY. By *Fred H. Lawson*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989. 146 pages and index, \$32.00.)

Dwarfed by its neighbor Saudi Arabia, the small island of Bahrain has had impressive success in its bid to modernize. The overwhelmingly Muslim population is about 70 percent Shia, with the remainder split among three Sunni affiliations; nevertheless the Sunnis have dominated in the prevailing social structure. Lawson states that although religious orientation is a significant factor in political affairs, the interaction of religion with class is more important in view of the fact that most of the peasants and laborers are Shia while most of the upper classes are Sunni.

The successes of Bahrain are primarily economic. From the 1930's to the mid-1960's, Bahrain's economy was dependent on oil. But since the mid-1960's, the economy has become more diversified, including heavy and light industry, modern agriculture and financial and other services. Because of this, Bahrain has become the financial center of the Middle East.

Designed as an introductory survey of Bahrain, this book presents the main facets of Bahraini society, economy, history and foreign relations. Lawson includes a helpful chapter outlining suggested readings for each area. He packs an impressive amount of information for the non-specialist into this relatively brief study. Those who seek the "secret" of Bahrain's success

may wish to read more detailed accounts, but this is a good place to start. D.E.S.

IRAN: THE KHOMEINI REVOLUTION. Edited by *Martin Wright*. (Harlow, England: Longman Group, 1989. 128 pages and index, \$12.95.)

Iran: The Khomeini Revolution is a thumbnail portrait of Iran today, including a summary of events leading up to the revolution and the 10 years thereafter, a brief historical overview of the road from medieval Persia to the present, the Iran-Iraq War and foreign relations. A chapter at the end features journalistic rapportage to provide some "local color," the most telling of which recounts how in 1979 the crowds became animated and abusive of the United States at the moment the TV cameras started rolling, but quickly toned down and became friendly when the cameras were turned off.

This slim volume tries to touch all the bases — detailing, for example, the reaction of specific countries to the Iranian revolution — but touches them in a superficial way that only begins to explain the complex dynamics of present-day Iran. D.E.S.

ALSO RECEIVED

THE EUROPA WORLD YEAR BOOK 1989. 2 volumes. 30th edition. (London: Europa Publications, Ltd., 1989. 3,037 pages, \$400.00.)

Europa has published an updated edition of its premier reference work that provides authoritative information on countries from A to Z, literally. These two volumes also contain full descriptions of more than 1,650 international organizations, including the United Nations.

D.E.S.

THE PRAGMATIC ENTENTE: ISRAELI-IRANIAN RELATIONS, 1948-1988. By *Sohrab Sobhani*. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1989. 179 pages, bibliography and index, \$37.95.)

PEASANT AND BUREAUCRACY IN BATHIST SYRIA: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT. By *Raymond A. Hinnebusch*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989. 325 pages, bibliography and index, \$46.95.)

LAND, LABOR AND THE ORIGINS OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT, 1882-1914. By *Gerson Shafir*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. 287 pages, bibliography, glossary, notes and index, \$44.50.)

ISRAEL, EGYPT, AND THE PALESTINIANS: FROM CAMP DAVID TO INTIFADA. By *Ann Mosely Lesch and Mark Tessler*. (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1989. 298 pages, maps and index, \$17.50.) ■

EGYPT

(Continued from page 68)

strengthen the radical trend, Brotherhood leaders are now finally opting into the political process.¹⁸

The debate is sharpened by the radicals' perceptions of their kinship ties to the Brothers. Radicals regard the Brotherhood as the foundation movement of Islamist opposition in the Arab world. Most look to Sayid Qutb (who legitimized rebellion against Muslim regimes that uphold secular laws, regimes he deemed apostate) as their mentor. Umar Abd Rahman stresses ideological affinity with the movement's founder, Hasan Banna, who refused to collaborate with a parliamentary order he viewed as corrupt. Abd Rahman accuses the Brothers of having betrayed Banna's legacy. A radical imam in Minya accuses the Brothers of abandoning the downtrodden and protecting the "way of the rich." Reports of occasional clashes between Muslim Brothers and radicals in this and other Upper Egyptian provinces point to the extent of discord within the Islamist movement.¹⁹

In fact, the Brotherhood is trapped between the escalating hostility of state and radical Islamists. In the aftermath of the Ayn Shams disturbances, General Guide Hamid Abu Nasr (in a letter to columnist Ibrahim Sadah) invoked the Brothers' credo, "preachers not judges"—the title of a book by Banna's successor, Hasan Hudaibi, written to refute Sayid Qutb—to reiterate their commitment to peaceful proselytization and the renunciation of coercion. He expressed agreement with a recent statement by three religious scholars and condemned both police and Islamists for "exchanging arguments through bullets." Yet he placed the ultimate blame for encouraging political violence on the government.²⁰ The bottom line for both General Guide Abu Nasr and Umar Abd Rahman, then, is the same. The question for the future is whether a shared religious orientation and outrage at state power will outweigh—or transform—fundamental disagreements on tactics and the theological justification for them.

KHALID ABDEL NASSER

The anti-establishment has a second, secular face, which proclaims itself the heir to the legacy of Nasserism and the 1952 Free Officers revolution.

¹⁸For outlines of the debate, see Springborg, *op cit.*, pp. 219-223; for the latter view, see Robert Bianchi, "Islam and Democracy in Egypt," *Current History*, February, 1989, pp. 33-95, 104; and James Pittaway, "A Benign Brotherhood?" *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1989, pp. 25-33.

¹⁹*Al-Watan*, February 9, 1989, in FBIS, February 15, 1989, and February 23, 1989, in FBIS, March 6, 1989.

²⁰See Sadah's column, *Akhbar al-Yawm* (Cairo), January 14, 1989, in FBIS, January 24, 1989.

Little is known of the group that calls itself Egypt's Nasserist Revolution, other than that it rejects diplomatic relations with Israel and the dominant American presence in Egypt. More troublesome than the attacks on foreign diplomats is the complicity of Khalid Abdel Nasser, along with his cousin Gamal and Sharif Shafii, son of revolutionary council member and later Vice President Husain Shafii.

Because of the personal links to the Nasserist legacy, the government has been reluctant to bring the case to trial. Confronted with presumably damning evidence, and responding perhaps to American and Israeli pressure, in February, 1988, the state prosecutor indicted 20 suspects, asking the death penalty for 11, including Khalid. Khalid fled to London, saying that he feared an Israeli attempt on his life. There were rumors that the government had warned and even urged him to leave the country. He finally arrived in Yugoslavia, from whence he announced his intent to return home to face his accusers. He had not done so by last summer (1989), when rumors had him seeking political asylum in Sudan. After repeated delays, the first prosecution witnesses began testifying in February. However, a variety of procedural matters have given the presiding judge ample excuse to proclaim long recesses.

The bold actions of a group linked in name to Nasser and Nasserism pose a particular symbolic problem for the Mubarak regime. Nasser remains a powerful political icon in Egypt; he is not universally revered but his name continues to stir great passions. Since his death in 1970, the legacy of the revolution that overthrew palace and Parliament and brought the military to power has been the focal point of intense debate and soul-searching. Despite Sadat's economic open door policy (*infitah*) and his initial steps to create a multiparty system, the 1952 revolution remains the basis of state legitimacy.

The Mubarak regime thus finds itself caught between its own efforts to follow Sadat's path—with greater checks on economic development and greater tolerance for a true opposition—and the inevitable fallout: a vigorous opposition that challenges the state's monopoly of power. Furthermore, the multifaceted opposition denies the regime's legitimacy by laying claim to prerevolutionary traditions (Wafd), rejecting its secular orientation (Muslim Brotherhood) or, conversely, accusing it of having betrayed its Nasserist legacy, at least in the fields of social, economic and foreign policy (NPUP, SLP).

Egypt's Nasserist Revolution also raises troubling questions about American influence in Egypt. The first arrests were made in late 1987, apparently after the leader's brother sought refuge in the United States embassy and confessed. Rumors that

American officials—even the director of the United States Central Intelligence Agency—interrogated him before turning him over to Egyptian authorities sparked an uproar in opposition camps. Official denials failed to quell subsequent rumors that the United States embassy had computerized lists of political activists, including full rosters of Egyptian civil servants. Defense lawyers have sought access to American documents, keeping this issue at the forefront of the case.²¹

No matter how much the government would like to sweep the case under the rug, it cannot do so without losing face. Public statements by the accused play on popular sentiments. In an interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper in March, 1988, Mahmud Nur Din, the accused ringleader, admitted responsibility for the attacks, but defended their legitimacy. He asserted that his movement acted against neither state nor citizenry, only against the foreign elements that trample Egypt's sovereignty with impunity. He revealed that in one case an attack on an Israeli target was called off when the assailants realized that the Egyptian driver might be harmed. He described Khalid Abdel Nasser as an "old friend" of like mind, whom the Americans and Israelis had framed. Khalid himself denies any overt involvement with the group, but refuses to condemn its actions. He portrays himself as the victim of those who seek to "settle old accounts" with his father.²²

THE VANISHING CENTER

The assured manner in which Abdel Nasser defends those who admit resorting to political violence speaks loudly to the broader sense of malaise in Egypt. That malaise is reflected most tellingly when leading establishment opposition figures express ambivalence toward the militant manifestations of dissent, whether Islamist or Nasserist. In the case of Egypt's Nasserist Revolution, even more than in cases concerning radical Islamist groups like Saved From Hell, acts of political violence have been accorded legitimacy by those who have pledged to reform the political and social order from within.

The opposition embraced Egypt's Nasserist Revolution with little thought of its long-term implications. Muhammad Abd Quddus, a Muslim Broth-

er regarded as mainstream, expressed distaste for violence while at the same time describing members of Egypt's Nasserist Revolution, Nasser in particular, as "heroes." Because not all Egyptians approved of the attacks on Americans, he regretted the fact that the United States was being targeted. However, he understood the group's motives. His sentiments, he asserted somewhat apologetically, betrayed no nostalgia for the Nasser family name. The SLP formed a defense committee and Magdi Husain (son of the late nationalist leader Ahmad Husain, an early inspiration of Gamal Abdel Nasser) visited Khalid in Yugoslavia, to help plan his legal strategy. Most noteworthy, Ahmad Khawaga, dean of the bar association, a prominent civil rights forum, agreed to represent Nasser and encouraged him to return to stand trial.²³

The cavalier fashion in which the leaders of the parliamentary opposition turned Khalid Abdel Nasser into a victim and his presumed associates into heroes underscores the fragility of the political center in Egypt. This has been a decade of dramatic political change. The open debate between those made by and those purged by the 1952 revolution encouraged hope that under Mubarak a true pluralism might emerge. At present, the process appears to have run awry. Despite a stated commitment to democratic reform, the Mubarak government refuses to grant real legitimacy to an establishment-oriented opposition that is a vigorous counter to state power.

The regime rarely succeeds in playing political parties against one another, something it should be able to do, given their divergent and often antithetical ideologies. Instead, government rhetoric and tactics unify the opposition. But rather than reaffirming faith in an evolving political process, parliamentary opposition leaders vent their frustration through the sometimes tacit promotion of forces that reject both law and social order. The confrontation between state and anti-establishment threatens to subvert the center just as it begins to come of age. ■

THE PALESTINIANS

(Continued from page 56)

possible Labor defeat would almost surely bring in a harder-line policy on the intifada, with Sharon as the likely Defense Minister. A severe crackdown on the West Bank with greatly increased bloodshed could possibly cause the Palestinians themselves to turn to the use of firearms—against current strict PLO policies. A bloodbath could cause the sharp deterioration of Egypt's ties with Israel, and could spark unsettling reactions from the majority Palestinian community in Jordan—not even excluding an uprising against the Hashemite leader

²¹See *Al-Ahram*, February 22, 1988, in FBIS, March 2, 1988; *Al-Dustur* (Amman), February 26, 1988, in FBIS, March 1, 1988; *MENA* (Cairo), February 14, 1989, in FBIS, February 15, 1989.

²²For Nur Din, see *Al-Anba*, March 7, 1988, in FBIS, March 10, 1988; for Nasser, see *Arab Times* (Kuwait), March 2, 1988, in FBIS, March 4, 1988.

²³*Al-Shab*, February 23, 1988, in FBIS, February 26, 1988; March 1 and March 8, 1988, in FBIS, March 16, 1988. Khawaga, a Wafdist with strong ties to the government, was the target of a movement that sought to oust him in late 1988.

ship. Syria is the one state that might seek to take advantage of such a situation. Any conflict between Syria and Israel might lead to deliberate Israeli expansion of the war into Jordan, to hasten Jordan's transformation into the ultimate Palestinian state; such a conflict would provide the kind of chaos that might serve as a cover for the extensive expulsion of the Palestinians from the West Bank.

On the other hand, it is only through some sharp change in its calculations that the Israeli right wing is likely to rethink the question of a Palestinian state. There is not sufficient incentive to bring about such an Israeli recalculation of its interests, and American pressure will not suffice to do so. As the intifada continues, increasing numbers of Israelis are apparently disturbed at the political, economic, moral, societal and international implications for Israel in its attempts to crush the intifada and Palestinian aspirations. But a consensus is far from present to reverse current policies, and may not emerge incrementally in the absence of some other sharp, catalytic developments.

The Palestinians are unlikely to abandon their own aspirations either, especially after the long, nation-building sacrifices of the intifada. While the intifada may well begin to weaken under continued or heightened pressure, it is hard to imagine that it will do more than retreat underground to smolder in rage and await another day. Nothing in the history of the West Bank suggests the possibility that the Palestinians will backpedal in the quest for statehood.

It is possible, however, that should long-term frustrations and anger produce a new wave of radicalism and terror in the PLO's policies—thereby destroying its international support and especially its ties with the United States—the PLO could be mortally weakened. Under such circumstances, PLO members in the West Bank and Gaza might develop an independent agenda involving a *de facto* distancing from the external PLO and a search for local accommodation. While the “local PLO” would not abandon the goal of a state, local members could abandon the complications of trying to settle the grievances of the Palestinian diaspora as well.

It is difficult and dangerous for the West Bankers, even those seeking a Palestinian state, to consider dispensing with the external PLO in a local agreement with Israel. The West Bankers lack the legitimacy to dispose of the claims and grievances of the Palestinian diaspora; only the PLO can do that. For a West Bank leadership to take such a step would open it to charges of a sell-out that could be risky and could deprive the future West Bank and Gazan state of any lasting stability. Indeed, only a small minority, representing the traditional and

pro-Jordanian leadership, has so far expressed any willingness to talk of modifying the election plan in which the PLO would join negotiations “later.” The whole political trend of the West Bank runs counter to any strengthening of the traditional leadership; indeed, a key facet of the intifada has been the social revolution within Palestinian society, in which women, students and workers have played a key role that almost bypasses the traditional leaders. The local representatives of the Unified Command consist largely of youths, introducing a whole new generation into the equation that has never even known Jordanian rule and that has lost its instinctive fear of the Israelis.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

The Arab world has sought domination of the Palestinian national movement to make it serve the political ends of individual Arab states. The PLO, a prize in the struggle between radical and conservative Arab states, emerged only in 1974 as a fairly clear independent entity and won Arab state recognition as the “sole representative of the Palestinian people.” Over the last decade, the confrontation states, especially Syria, have attempted to control the movement and destroy the control of Arafat's moderate wing. With the Arab summit meeting in Morocco in May, 1989, however, Arafat won a considerable triumph with general Arab state acceptance of his peace initiative, including his acceptance of Israel's right to exist and his renunciation of terrorism. With this imprimatur, Arafat is now free to pursue a Palestinian-Israeli settlement without opening himself to charge of “betrayal” of the Arab cause. However, the Arab states almost certainly expect that any settlement between the Palestinians and Israel will ultimately take place in the context of an international peace conference that would seek to resolve all border disputes between the Arab states and Israel, especially the issue of Israel's possession of the Golan Heights. While a Palestinian settlement cannot be held hostage to a Syrian-Israeli settlement, even the PLO must be mindful that it cannot blithely engage in its own “Camp David.”

The revolutionary changes in Soviet foreign policy and ideology clearly indicate there is no Soviet desire for a military conflict in the Middle East. Indeed, the Soviet role for several years has been markedly constructive; Soviet diplomats have played a major part in persuading radical PLO factions—like George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Nayif Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine—to abstain from blocking Arafat's peace initiatives. This Soviet-supported breathing room has given Arafat the flexibility to make progress with his

own peace offensive over the past year.

Nonetheless, the radical PLO factions consistently accuse Arafat of exceeding his authority in making statements that have not been ratified by the full PNC. A vivid example of this was Arafat's surprise unveiling of the French term *caduque* (roughly meaning "lapsed," or "null and void") to describe the 25-year-old Palestine National Charter, which is generally interpreted to call for the destruction of Israel. Many in the PLO believe that only the PNC itself can dispense with such a time-honored document. In the interim, Habash has reiterated his beliefs that the PLO cannot continue to make unreciprocated unilateral concessions to Israel and the United States, and that Arafat will eventually realize that his policies have not been working. The next PNC meeting should provide a critical indicator of broad Palestinian opinion toward Arafat's policies during this past year. Arafat's own position was clearly reaffirmed at the August, 1989, Fatah congress.

Despite all these objections, Arafat continues to pursue his own diplomatic agenda. Israelis accurately point out the number of contradictions that exist between Arafat's statements to Western audiences and those made to Arab and Palestinian audiences; while unsettling and clearly suggestive of a lack of diplomatic precision on Arafat's part, Arafat's key political positions have won the general acceptance of most Palestinians, and certainly most of those in the occupied territories.

PALESTINIAN FUNDAMENTALISTS

One group in the West Bank that emphatically rejects the Arafat line on a settlement is made up of the religious fundamentalists or, more accurately, the Islamists. The Islamists had been tacitly encouraged by Israel over the years as a foil to the PLO-dominated nationalist movement. With the emergence of a powerful and effective Islamist movement in the 1980's and the model of Shia success in Lebanon, Israel has rethought its tolerant position; over the last summer, it arrested 250 leaders of the Gaza-based Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) and another 1,000 activists, weakening Hamas's claim to leadership. Nonetheless, the various fundamentalist groups remain potential stumbling blocks to any peaceful settlement because of their unwillingness to concede any part of "Islamic Palestine" to Israel. Nor do the Islamists accept the PLO's idea of a secular leadership for Palestine.

While the Islamists rank well below the secular parties among Palestinians, they remain a force of concern to Israel. Should the level of violence and frustration on the West Bank greatly increase, such a development would play into the hands of the

Islamists and would strengthen an uncompromising Palestinian militancy. Despite considerable competition for followers, there has been no meaningful break between the secularists and the Islamists; the Islamists are likely to avoid a strategic break as long as the struggle for an independent Palestine continues.

Despite extremely encouraging movement by the PLO toward political realism and a willingness to negotiate, the wherewithal for a settlement with the PLO does not yet exist in Israel. However, the situation there remains fluid. A peace process must await those events that will change Israeli minds about dealing with the PLO and accepting a Palestinian state. The PLO has already made its major move to accommodation; Arafat's own critical task will be to keep the PLO intact and control the moderates. Arafat must remain powerful enough to hold the organization together despite challenges from within the intifada until a more realistic climate for negotiations emerges. The United States must continue to insist on an open-ended process. Meanwhile, the major international wild card is the internal situation in Jordan. ■

IRAN

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siders," are most influential in traditional religious organizations together with a large number of revolutionary and quasi-government organizations.

The reasons for the ongoing conflict between "insiders" and "outsiders" must be sought in the way the clerical network has come to control Iran's state apparatus. Early on, when the clerics attained political power, they did not so much transform as simply strive to infiltrate the existing government structures. Thus, the old bureaucratic apparatus remained more or less in place. More important, as the insiders gradually strengthened their administrative positions, they themselves came to advocate orderly behavior and government supremacy. Therefore, the conservatism of the old bureaucracy has apparently softened the more revolutionary inclinations of the insiders.

As noted earlier, aside from controlling the government apparatus, the new regime created an array of new organizations. These not only came to duplicate the functions of the government personnel, they have emerged as formidable organizations of mass mobilization, Islamic education and patronage. Thus, like the insiders, the outsiders also constitute a broad category of clerics. As such, they continue to guard their privileges and autonomy jealously; regardless of their political ideologies and postures, they seem to be united in resisting most integration efforts, particularly when the problem of financial control comes to the fore. While infight-

ing often prevents rational planning in socioeconomic matters, slows down various social reforms and hinders the institutionalization of the regime, infighting does not by itself threaten the bases of clerical power in Iran. On the contrary, quarrels of this nature, which are often magnified in the country's news media, often stimulate public attention and increase concern about domestic socioeconomic problems.

Within the complicated web of current Iranian politics, it is possible to distinguish three broad political and ideological currents: conservative, extremist and pragmatist. In Iranian domestic political life, a conservative cleric may best be defined as an individual who is a true believer on matters of Shia religious doctrine but who is often willing to tolerate other opinions on social and economic issues. However, on one end of the conservative continuum are clerics who maintain profoundly conservative, if not reactionary, value preferences when it comes to matters like secular education, social egalitarianism and women's rights. On the other end are those who are fairly flexible on these issues while rigidly opposed to government intervention in social and economic affairs. As a whole, what tends to unite most conservatives is their opposition to Communist ideology and the participation of revolutionary socialists in Iranian political life.

Like the conservatives, what may be conveniently called the extremist camp is far from being a unified category. Those exhibiting strong extremist tendencies belong to many more or less like-minded but distinct subgroups. On one end of the extremist continuum, there are those who advocate a strongly centralized government, complete nationalization of major industries, tight controls over commercial activities and the expropriation of large landholdings. This group also includes a large and influential cluster of nonclerics. Most members of the latter group are young, often university-educated people who, despite their attachment to Shia Islamic values, show a generally more accommodating attitude toward the Soviet bloc and leftist ideologies. Many are former revolutionary activists and supporters of various Islamic Marxist underground groups of the late 1970's. On the other end of the extremist continuum are those clerics who, despite their advocacy of strong government authority, tend to deemphasize control of commerce, land expropriation, or free enterprise, in part on religious grounds.

In general, many extremists analyze international and domestic politics in terms of "oppressor" and "oppressed"; they regard Islam as a revolutionary ideology and advocate the "export" of the Islamic revolution. Clerics of this persuasion are

found mostly in nongovernment revolutionary organizations. In contrast, many other influential clerics are somewhat more pragmatic. Although they do not reject the "revolutionary" qualities of Islam or the imperative to support the economically deprived classes, they deemphasize the economic interpretation of "oppression" and call for the implementation of social reforms. This subgroup evinces a greater readiness to forge accommodations on specific issues with the pragmatic camp.

The third broad category of ruling Shia clerics and their subordinate civilian functionaries comprises those whose political pragmatism, more than anything else, sets them apart from many of their colleagues. There are at least two types of pragmatists among the post-Khomeini clerical leadership. The first consists of those individuals who remain firmly opposed to ideologues and theoreticians of all types. Instead, they seek to retain political power and strengthen their influence by taking popular public positions. This type of cleric usually justifies his shifting political stands in terms of the traditionally sanctioned Shia principle according to which genuine leaders are expected to follow the wishes of the masses of believers.

Although many leading pragmatic clerics may be perceived as "time-servers" or "opportunists" in the West, in the Iranian political context little or no negative value is attached to such behavior. On the contrary, in the intensely personal and fluid world of Iranian politics, this type of opportunistic behavior is often taken as a sign of an individual's political independence, sincerity in service to the people and personal moral strength.

The second type of political pragmatist includes a fairly large number of better educated and more experienced middle-level clerics who are decidedly less ideological and rhetorical than others and seek to promote their personal fortunes by a willingness to cooperate with the dominant political force of the period. In general, many such individuals hold managerial positions in the country's public educational and banking systems, several ministries, and within the more scientifically oriented public and private institutions.

ROLE OF THE ISSUES

The common devotion of Iran's ruling clerics to the Islamic regime's ideals and their considerable internal solidarity have not prevented the emergence of factional differences. Disagreements among the three large factional coalitions remain sharpest on economic issues. Concern about land expropriation, the nationalization of large-scale industries, the regulation of foreign trade and the distribution of wealth have been the very issues that have bedeviled Iran's rulers since the earliest days of

the revolution; they continue to generate intense partisan debate in the post-Khomeini period.

This debate has often been interpreted—erroneously—in the West as a left-right division within the clerical network. Some media organs portray those who favor government intervention in economic affairs as “the radicals” or leftists in favor of socialist policies, and those who oppose such policies as “moderates.” Factional differences on economic matters are not an issue of capitalism versus socialism. On the contrary, the clerics are largely unified in the belief that Islam honors private property and that it is the government’s duty to protect it. Thus, the role of issue-oriented disagreements in current Iranian politics should not be exaggerated. Indeed, in contrast to personal and personality differences, nonpersonal issues and ideological cleavages have played a secondary and much weaker role in factional alignments. As a consequence, divisions of this nature are poor indicators of the internal dynamics of clerical politics in Iran.

As of this writing, it is evident that all three political coalitions are under considerable domestic pressure, initially caused by the disclosure of secret Iranian contacts with the United States. Since then, pressure has increased dramatically, especially with Rafsanjani’s election as President.

As stated earlier, the new leadership faces several challenges that are still awaiting urgent policy decisions: the rebuilding of the shattered economy, the demobilization of Iran’s huge army, and the fulfillment of the long-promised political and socioeconomic reforms. Thus far, the regime in Teheran is apparently committed to the political resolution of the Iran-Iraq conflict, to promoting domestic economic reconstruction and to its new policy of bridge-building with the West. However, it is by no means clear that such measures represent a fundamental change in the long-term domestic and foreign policy objectives of the Islamic Republic; they may equally be designed to shore up the regime’s political and military position in pursuit of its original radical Islamic and revolutionary goals. After all, it took the Bolshevik revolution nearly three decades to spread to the east and west of Russia; and it took Cuba’s leader Fidel Castro two decades after he entered Havana to establish a beachhead in Central America. ■

JORDAN

(Continued from page 60)

on the West Bank, ostensibly no longer an area of Jordanian authority. Though Jordan’s Parliament has, in recent years, lacked the power to influence government policy in any appreciable way, Hus-

sein had long promised to revitalize it as an institution answerable to the concerns of the people. His objective was to reshape Parliament into an East Bank-only Assembly, giving substance to the divorce from the West Bank. Indeed, the same week the riots broke out, the Interior Ministry announced the cancellation of Parliament’s 11 West Bank constituencies and plans for elections for the new House to be held in 1990.

Days after the rioting, the King declared that elections would be held before year’s end. (They were eventually held on November 8.) Moreover, he released all those detained in the April riots in early May, and authorized a partial amnesty for other prisoners, including some political prisoners, later that month. In the following weeks, Bin Shakir reinstated several prominent journalists who had been proscribed under the previous government and allowed the local media to comment with relatively unbridled freedom on the internal economic and political situation.

Underpinning all these efforts was the regime’s desire to return to its East Bank roots and to reaffirm its ties to its most important domestic constituencies. Time and time again, the King addressed delegations of notables from the East Bank cities and towns that had been the scene of the April riots. His message often amounted to an apology for having spent too much time in the international arena and too little supervising domestic developments. “I believe I personally was probably not as involved as I might have otherwise been in the affairs of Jordan internally,” said the King. “I had focused my attention on the Arab world and the world scene.”¹²

INTER-ARAB COOPERATION

Jordan, of course, did not climb inside a shell in 1989. It continued to be an active and engaged player in inter-Arab and peace process politics. For the King, one of the highlights of the year was the formal establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) in February. The ACC, whose members include Egypt, Iraq, North Yemen and Jordan, is an embryonic effort to build a common market encompassing half the Arab world’s population. Jordan hopes that the ACC will not only provide a framework to face the growth of other regional economic units (i.e., the Gulf Cooperation Council and the North African Union) and the single European market of 1992, but that it will also offer a barrier-free home for the Kingdom’s excess skilled labor.

Meanwhile, Jordan maintained its verbal support for the Palestinian uprising and for the PLO’s diplomatic strategy. Thus, the PLO was allowed to establish an embassy in Amman in January, 1989; the headquarters of the Palestine National Fund

¹²*Jordan Times*, July 17, 1989, cited in FBIS, July 17, 1989.

was reopened there in July. In line with PLO declarations, the King continually reaffirmed his call for a five-power international peace conference as the best route to a solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Through it all, however, Jordan pointed out that it still had a vital rôle to play in the peace process as a confrontation state with the longest border with Israel, a rôle that did not end with the disengagement from the West Bank.

As the Kingdom's internal problems mounted, relations with Israel deteriorated. The tacit cooperation that had marked relations between the two ostensible belligerents fell into a deep and uneasy freeze. On several occasions, the Amman government blamed its own economic failings on Israeli subversion and propaganda.¹³ The normally quiet Jordanian-Israeli frontier was the scene of an unusually high number of cross-border infiltrations, most (but not all) carried out by Palestinian extremists. But most disquieting to Israeli officials was an upgrading in the Iraqi-Jordanian strategic relationship that even included permission for Iraqi reconnaissance planes to use Jordanian air space along the Israeli border.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

All these developments, however, were a relative sideshow compared with events inside the Kingdom. In 1989, relations with both Israel and the PLO became dependent on Jordan's domestic scene. And the parliamentary elections of November, 1989, provided the climax of that internal drama.

Elections were supposed to fulfill three objectives. First, elections were themselves the fulfillment of the King's long-standing promise to broaden democracy, what former Foreign Minister Faher Masri called "Jordanian glasnost."¹⁴ Second, the monarchy hoped that the restoration of Parliament would provide Jordan's growing middle class and technocracy with an outlet for pent-up political frustration so that the regime could gain tacit support for the next stage of its economic austerity plan. Third, the very act of holding East Bank-only elections was meant to confirm to the United States, Israel and the PLO that the King was serious when

he severed ties with the West Bank, in effect relinquishing any claims to Palestine.

The campaign process turned out to be more open and free-wheeling than observers had expected. More than 640 candidates vied for the new Parliament's 80 seats. Since political parties have been banned since the imposition of martial law in 1957, all candidates ran as independents. Nevertheless, the regime turned a blind eye to the formation of electoral blocs and political groupings, ranging from Communists to Islamic fundamentalists.¹⁵

Election day provided a smashing victory for Jordan's Islamic bloc.¹⁶ The Muslim Brotherhood and its sympathizers crushed all opposition in garnering almost half the seats in Parliament. Of its slate of 26 candidates, 20 won. In addition, the Brotherhood can count on the support of at least a dozen other fundamentalists who campaigned as independents.

The fundamentalists' victory was particularly impressive in the cities. In Amman, they took at least 13 of 17 seats reserved for Muslim candidates. If electoral districts had not been drawn to favor minorities and rural areas, the fundamentalists might have gained an outright majority.

For their part, regime loyalists fared very poorly. At least a dozen former Cabinet ministers, senior officials, governors, mayors, ambassadors, bedouin chiefs and ex-army officers failed in their parliamentary bids. Given the seats won by leftists and Arab nationalists, the "King's men" will control Parliament only by a razor-thin majority.

Fundamentalists won for three reasons. First, as the only quasi-political organization allowed to function in Jordan for the last three decades, they capitalized on their comparative advantage in organization. Second, of all the candidates, the fundamentalists appealed most to the hopes and fears of Jordan's poor, unemployed and undereducated. Their platform called for the prosecution of former government officials who had allegedly mishandled the economy into bankruptcy and for the abrogation of the Kingdom's price-stabilization agreement with the IMF. Third, and perhaps most important, the fundamentalists' main opposition—the PLO—stood on the sidelines. As a result of King Hussein's support for the PLO's declaration of statehood, most mainstream local Palestinian leaders took no part in the elections. That left the field open for fundamentalists, whose platform rejects the disengagement and calls for a holy war against Israel; they won electoral districts carved out of the most hard-bitten Palestinian refugee camps.

It is too early to tell whether the fundamentalists will be an obstructionist force in Parliament or will be co-opted by the regime. Indeed, at the time of this writing, it is not at all clear what sort of decision-making rôle, if any, the government will

¹³Though there was a kernel of truth to Jordan's accusations, there was clearly no consistent government policy or "scheme" to undermine the value of the dinar. See, for example, statements by King Hussein, Amman Television Service, July 30, 1989, cited in FBIS, August 2, 1989.

¹⁴"Glasnost' in Jordan," *Washington Post*, October 3, 1989.

¹⁵See "Jordan Vote Stirs Fervor Where Fiat Is the Rule," *The New York Times*, October 26, 1989.

¹⁶Election-day turnout was officially estimated at 62 percent of registered voters, meaning that about 540,000 people went to the polls. "Militant Muslims Gain in Jordan Voting," *The New York Times*, November 10, 1989.

allot to the new Assembly. But the fundamentalists' solid showing was clearly not the outcome the regime hoped for. Although the King professed satisfaction with the election results, he had warned the electorate against mixing religion and politics, and the fundamentalist victory must, in some way, be taken as an affront to him.¹⁷

Given its results, the election fulfilled only two of its three intended objectives. On the positive side, it proved that the King is a man of his word when he promised a free and fair vote, and it gave a flavor of irreversibility to his disengagement from the West Bank. But on the crucial issue of opening the political process to the middle class and the forward-looking technocrats, the election may have been a step backward.

At this stage, Jordan need not feel threatened by about the immediate political dangers of radical Islam. Jordanian fundamentalists are neither as united nor as revolutionary as their rhetoric suggests.¹⁸ Moreover, the regime possesses too much residual power to be overly frightened by a movement that owes its very existence over the past three decades to royal sufferance.

However, the regime faces an existential challenge in trying to rebuild a governing coalition in disarray. If the regime has decided to move down the path of reform, harnessing the latent support of the various pro-government segments of society—be they bedouin, urban, technocrat, middle class or entrepreneurial—is paramount. Historically, however, Jordan has been unable to establish a popular-based political party in the service of the regime. Assembling such a broad coalition, while struggling with a still fragile and critical economic situation, is the arduous task ahead. ■

¹⁷See King Hussein's nationwide television address, October 7, 1989, cited in FBIS, October 10, 1989.

¹⁸See the author's "They Cannot Stop Our Tongues": *Islamic Activism in Jordan*, Washington Institute Policy Paper No. 5, 1986.

ISRAEL

(Continued from page 72)

territories, which derived from the general state of the Israeli economy, was exacerbated by the Palestinian pressure on workers not to show up for their jobs in Israel. By some estimates, at least 20 percent of these workers were complying with the pressure. The declining reliability of Palestinian workers caused Israeli employers to look for alternative sources of labor.

The uprising created other costs for Israel. It was estimated that the cost of the IDF battle against the uprising would surpass one billion shekels (about

¹⁰Some of the possibilities for a settlement are discussed by Daniel J. Elazar, *Israel: Building a New Society* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 167-184.

U.S.\$500 million) for the 1989-1990 fiscal year. Furthermore, the financial drain was creating a strain in the Defense Ministry, which had to divert funds from general military purposes, like readiness and procurement, in order to fund its troops.

Within Israel, the unemployment rate exceeded 9 percent and threatened to exceed 10 percent for the first time in over 20 years. The situation was particularly difficult in the development towns, where the rate was often substantially higher than rates in the rest of the country. For example, the unemployment rate in the towns of Netivot and Or Akiva was about 21 percent. During the year, representatives of these areas and the Histadrut labor federation launched protests against government economic policies.

Unemployment was exacerbated by a climbing inflation rate. During the term of the previous national unity government, inflation had been reduced from triple digits to the teens. However, in the first year of the new government, the rate began to rise again, approaching an annual rate of nearly 22 percent. The fact that inflation was rising during a recession was particularly troubling.

THE PEACE PROCESS

The combination of the pressure generated by the uprising and the anticipation of the need for movement in order satisfy American expectations produced a flurry of diplomatic activity during 1989. The centerpiece was the election plan developed by Shamir and Rabin in May, which also included Israel's requirements for a broad peace and a settlement of the refugee problem. The plan led to discussions with the Egyptians and the Americans, who respectively produced the Mubarak and the Baker variations. Although cynics might have viewed the exercise as a matter of squaring the circle, most observers in Israel saw the Israeli initiative as a genuine effort toward a settlement, albeit with significant restrictions.

The election plan represented an attempt to resolve a long-standing problem, namely, how the Palestinians would be represented. Despite the fact that the Arab world in general contends that the PLO fills that role and that most public pronouncements from the territories concur, Israel has steadfastly refused to entertain the possibility of talks with the PLO, suggesting that the moderate-sounding PLO statements of late 1988 were merely a smokescreen for its traditional anti-Israel stance. Consequently, Israel had to propose a way to identify the representatives of the residents of the territories with whom Israel might negotiate. In accordance with the Camp David framework, the negotiations were to work out interim autonomy arrangements pending a final settlement later.¹⁰ Such

an approach was fundamentally at odds with the PLO, which insisted that it should represent the Palestinians and that the negotiations should be about Palestinian statehood.

The United States, anxious for action on the diplomatic front, saw Shamir's proposals as an opportunity to negotiate. But the administration, through Secretary of State Baker, did not view favorably either the prospect of Israeli annexation of the territory or the expansion of Israeli settlements; the United States believed that Israel must "lay aside, once and for all, the unrealistic vision of a Greater Israel." Thus the Americans were trying to make explicit just what Israel was trying to soft-pedal, the outlines of a final settlement.

The differences between Likud and Labor over the concept of "territories for peace" had been shunted aside in the Shamir-Rabin version of the election plan, on the assumption that there would be plenty of time for such a confrontation once an interim agreement had been reached. In Israel, Baker's bluntness was seen as a gesture in the direction of the PLO, which was reluctant to give its blessing to negotiations that did not offer some indication of the general content of a final settlement. The problem from the Israeli perspective was that the more explicit United States expectations were concerning a final settlement, the more difficult it became to maintain a consensus in the unity government on the first stage of the process. Indeed, it was precisely this point that led Ministers Sharon, Levy and Modai to challenge the Prime Minister from inside his own Likud party.

In September, Egyptian President Mubarak became involved in the process by presenting his 10-point plan to try to bridge the gap between the Israeli and Palestinian positions. Despite significant differences between his plan and the official Israeli plan, the government chose to regard it as an attempt to implement the Israeli initiative. There were three key reasons for Israeli ambivalence about Mubarak's points: allowing Arab residents of Jerusalem to vote in the elections, the explicit endorsement of the land-for-peace formula and the possibility that the PLO would in effect name and control the Palestinian delegation, which would include Palestinians not living in the territories. Voting by Jerusalemites called into question Jerusalem's status as Israel's undivided capital; land for peace contravened Likud policy; and PLO control meant that in effect Israel would be negotiating with the PLO. Even so, the Labor party seemed prepared to accept Mubarak's conditions.

Secretary Baker entered the process again with his own list of five points in October. Israelis thought Baker was giving the PLO too great a role in forming the Palestinian delegation. Further-

more, Baker explicitly acknowledged that the Palestinians might well raise issues that went beyond the technical agenda of election modalities that Israel preferred. Still, Baker avoided mentioning Palestinian self-determination, any direct Israeli-PLO dialogue and any explicit reference to the land-for-peace concept. As a result, Israel was eventually persuaded to accept the five points in November, albeit with several reservations. At this writing, neither Egypt nor the PLO had accepted Baker's ideas, so it was unclear whether negotiations would actually get under way on that basis.

Israel's sometimes confusing responses to Baker's ideas reflected the increasingly deep divisions within the unity government. For example, while Likud adamantly opposed negotiating with the PLO, much of Labor's Knesset delegation was willing to do so and would not rule out a Palestinian state (assuming that adequate safeguards could be devised). Likud had its own problem of dissent. While Shamir and Foreign Minister Moshe Arens had endorsed Rabin's original election idea, an important faction in the party believed that the elections were the first step down a slippery slope that would lead eventually to a Palestinian state. Therefore, all four of the principal Israeli players—Shamir, Arens, Peres and Rabin—were constrained in their actions by divisions within their respective parties.

The dissatisfaction within Labor led to calls for the end of the coalition government. Peres had been negotiating with the religious parties to try to form a narrow coalition, but it remained unclear whether Labor would risk leaving the government and paying the high political price demanded by the religious parties. Nor was it clear that the religious parties were prepared to go ahead, although in the fall the right-wing Agudat Yisrael party signaled its intention to withdraw from the government if its demands were not met.

CONCLUSION

The overriding issue in Israel during the past year has been a move to initiate the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians by holding elections in the territories. The seemingly glacial progress reflects deep divisions in the Israeli political system regarding ends and means, as well as Arab efforts to gain the best possible position for the start of talks. From Israel's perspective, the issues are grave and of great consequence. Much of the hesitation on the Israeli side is the result of decades of hostility toward Israel from the Arab world and especially from the PLO.

It is unlikely that Israeli hesitation can be eliminated until there is a consensus within Israel that the PLO, which claims to represent the

Palestinians and is widely regarded as doing so, has changed fundamentally. The events of the past year indicate at least a superficial change. But most Israelis are not convinced that the change in the PLO is more than superficial. Until that occurs, Israeli policy is likely to reflect the ambivalence that is now characteristic of Israeli politics. ■

UNITED STATES ROLE

(Continued from page 52)

dency and one that he had learned to expect, after his eight years as Vice President during several hostage situations. He was faced with the same range of poor choices that had been available to his predecessors. These were essentially to use direct military force in Lebanon—thus potentially provoking more killings and breeding support for the terrorists because of the accidental death of civilians—or doing little or nothing to free the United States citizens who remained hostage in Lebanon. Indeed, a terrorist group, the Revolutionary Justice Organization, then threatened to hang another American hostage, Joseph Cicippio, at a date and time certain, and only provided a last-minute “reprieve” on August 3 after several days of manipulating the Western media and American sympathies.

Apparently recognizing his lack of desirable courses of action, Bush tried to steer between the different stances struck by earlier Presidents. He rushed back to Washington, D.C., from a trip around the country—thus seeming to highlight his own role in the crisis, as had former President Jimmy Carter. But he then began to go about a President’s normal business, in order not to increase the price that the terrorists could exact in terms of national expectations. Like Ronald Reagan, Bush undertook a show of force, but he did not mislead the American people into believing that United States power could gain the unachievable. The President sent warnings; he developed and conducted a complex and far-flung diplomacy; and he sent United States ships both to the eastern Mediterranean Sea and to the vicinity of the Persian Gulf—near Iran, to which the terrorists in Lebanon said they owed their allegiance.

When the threat to kill Cicippio was lifted, American popular attention to the latest hostage crisis dissipated. In contrast to the period from 1979 to about the time of the Iran-contra scandal, the issue of American hostages no longer seemed to be a festering popular concern; it was rather a source of episodic outrage. In retrospect, President Bush proved to have conducted the crisis with virtually no lapses in judgment. Unable to affect events decisively—and certainly unwilling to give in to terrorists’ demands—he was still able to combine both

diplomacy and military maneuver in a blend that was satisfying to the American people. In competition with terrorists seeking to force his hand at home, he did not lose.

President Bush was obviously aware that the crisis surrounding the murder of Colonel Higgins was more complicated than many earlier terrorist outrages. Iran was implicated and reaction in the United States was intense concerning this latest involvement in terrorism by a country that had caused the United States so much grief. But which Iran? Since the death of Iran’s Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini on June 3, 1989—and even well before then—a struggle for power in Teheran had begun. Divisions were not clear-cut, but generalizations were possible. The principle contenders could be divided into “radicals” and “pragmatists.” The former wished to fulfill what they believed to be Khomeini’s revolutionary legacy; they favored a major role for the state in the economy and many of them were pro-Soviet, some intensely so. The “pragmatists,” in contrast, seemed to recognize that Iran’s survival depended on rebuilding a country shattered by eight years of devastation wrought by the war that Iraq began in 1980. This group—led by the man who became Iran’s elected President, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani—saw a more important role in the Iranian economy for the private sector and, whether by inclination or simply by necessity, opted for improved relations with the West. The West alone could provide the tools needed to rebuilt Iran, a point dramatized by Soviet confessions of economic failure.

Before coming to office in January, 1989, President Bush had apparently reached two conclusions, based on his observation of the turmoil in Iran and in United States policy toward it during the Reagan years. He believed that the independence and integrity of Iran were important to the United States—this was the unrefuted strategic argument behind the “arms for hostages” dealings of 1985–1987; and he believed that Iranian leaders would be compelled to accept the importance of tolerable relations with the West after the cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq War.

Thus, in his inaugural address, President Bush held out an unexpected olive branch, intended in part for Iran and for anyone else with any influence over the hostage-takers in Lebanon:

There are today Americans who are held against their will in foreign lands and Americans who are unaccounted for. Assistance can be shown here and will be long remembered. Goodwill begets goodwill. Good faith can be a spiral that endlessly moves on.

The road to “goodwill,” however, proved to be long and rocky. Soon after President Bush issued

this appeal, an accident of literature strengthened the hands of the so-called radicals in Iran, who still included Khomeini. A novel written by an Indian Muslim living in Great Britain, Salman Rushdie, gained widespread prominence. When it first appeared, *The Satanic Verses* had been condemned as blasphemous by many Muslims, Sunni and Shiite alike, especially in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Yet it was only in February, 1989, when a minor cleric in Iran called for a death sentence for Rushdie—and when Khomeini took up the standard—that the issue took on international proportions.

The Western rejection of threats against Rushdie had a significant political impact. For radicals in Iran, the pace of reconciliation with the West was slowed. Ironically, the summer crisis over the murder of Colonel Higgins allowed the subject of United States relations with Iran to reemerge. While many Americans believed that Iran should be held responsible, others believed that Rafsanjani was himself an intended political victim and that Iranian radicals and their allies in Lebanon were using this crisis to undermine him at home. Judging by President Bush's conduct of the crisis, this was apparently his view as well. He exerted enough pressure on Iran—a show of naval force—to permit Rafsanjani to compare it publicly with the accidental shooting down of an Iranian civilian airbus in July, 1988, by the U.S.S. *Vincennes*, an action that helped prompt Iran to accept the cease-fire with Iraq. But the President did not strike Iran. He used the occasion for indirect diplomacy and, at the end of the crisis, the United States government hinted that Iran had been helpful in its resolution.

For the Bush administration, therefore, a strategic course had been set—apparently deriving from the President's vision, not from the bureaucracy. As was implied in Bush's inaugural address, the United States would improve relations with Iran if Iran acted responsibly toward the outside world and, in particular, toward the United States.

For the Bush administration, however, there was a further reason to try to improve relations with Iran—a reason that seemed to be at variance with developments elsewhere in the world: the role of Soviet influence. In the region of southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf, unique among the world's most important areas, the Soviet Union continued to press its advantage—in Afghanistan through massive military aid to the Kabul regime, in Iran through diplomacy. This was made clear, for example, by a visit to Teheran by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, even though he ostensibly focused on Soviet efforts to help resolve the hostage crisis.

In November, President Bush took one more step

to show his own goodwill toward Iran and to enter the competition with the Soviet Union. He directed the release from escrow of \$567 million in Iranian assets frozen in 1979. He related this act to the continued holding of hostages but also seemed to recognize the limits of Rafsanjani's influence:

I'd like to get this underbrush cleaned out now. I think they have made some positive statements, but I don't know whether it will work that way or not. I hope that they will do what they can to influence those who hold these hostages.

It was obvious that the United States could not act alone, that Rafsanjani was not master in his own house, that Iran could still move in ways hostile to the United States and to United States interests, that Soviet diplomats were in the game and that American public opinion was still skeptical of reconciliation with Iran.

For the United States, therefore, President Bush's efforts to create more flexibility in dealing with Iran underscored his understanding of the continuing agenda for the United States in this area of the world—an area still in turmoil, awash in modern weaponry, and, in the key country of Iran, still subject to competition for influence between the Soviet Union and the United States. Thus 1989 proved to be a year in which a new administration began to shape its perspectives toward the region, but played a relatively modest role. The year 1990 beckoned as a year in which United States intentions and its ability to affect events in the Middle East would be tested. ■

LEBANON

(Continued from page 76)

But on November 22, René Moawad was assassinated in a car bomb explosion. More than one party could have sought his death, but Syria and its allies had no doubts—they blamed General Aoun. In any event, Syria reacted swiftly and effectively. Without standing on ceremony, the Lebanese Parliament was summoned to elect Elias Hrawi, a Maronite deputy from the Christian (but not Maronite) town of Zahle in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley. Hrawi, a landlord who was elected to Parliament in 1972, had served as a minister between 1980 and 1982, and until his election to the presidency he could easily have been defined as a second-echelon politician.

Beyond filling the vacuum created by Moawad's assassination, Syria intensified the pressure begun after his election to delegitimize and unseat General Aoun. Syrians argued that Lebanon had a duly elected head of state, that a process of reform had been launched, and that Aoun was an illegitimate

usurper obstructing the reform process. The argument was backed by a Syrian military build-up suggesting (at this writing) that Syria was about to invade the Christian autonomous area.

But Assad was in no hurry to invade. His tactics, as on earlier occasions in Lebanon, were to avoid head-on collisions. Instead, he chose to wear down his opponents and to accustom public opinion to the prospect of invasion.

The prospect drew several reactions. The first reaction came from Israel, whose leadership tried to walk the tightrope of deterring Syria while avoiding any commitment to come to the aid of the Maronites. Drawing a lesson from the 1982-1985 debacle in Lebanon, the Israeli leadership was determined to avoid any military involvement in Lebanon's national policies and to limit Israel's military interests in Lebanon to the security zone.

Israel's abduction on July 28 of Sheik Abdul Karim Obeid, a mid-level local leader of the Hezbollah, fused some of these issues and generated a brief but intense international crisis.

Obeid was taken by Israeli commandos from his home in the southern Lebanese village of Jibshit. By abducting a fairly significant leader of Hezbollah, Israel tried to break the deadlock in the long and futile negotiations aiming at obtaining the release (or at least establishing the fate) of three Israeli soldiers held by the Lebanese Shiites—an air force navigator captured by Amal and two soldiers abducted by Hezbollah. The timing was apparently determined by the fact that Sheik Obeid, identified by the Israelis earlier as a target, was in Jibshit at that time.

Hezbollah's leadership was clearly embarrassed by the abduction. Sheik Obeid was sufficiently well-placed to have much information about the movement and its activities. Thus Hezbollah tried to obtain his immediate release by threatening to execute United States Marine Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins, who was on loan to the United Nations observer team in southern Lebanon and had been abducted by Hezbollah in February, 1988. It was his abduction that had triggered fighting between Amal and Hezbollah in the late winter of 1988.

Higgins had been killed by his captors well before July, 1989, and their threat to execute him in July was well-calculated. If the Israelis refused to return Sheik Obeid, an old videotape showing the colonel's hanging body would be released and then Israel and not the Hezbollah would be blamed for his death. Furthermore, soon after releasing the tape, Hezbollah issued a second ultimatum—it would execute another hostage, Joseph Cicippio, an American civilian, if Israel failed to release Sheik Obeid. The United States had to threaten military action; Cicippio was spared; and the issue subsided.

Sheik Obeid is still in Israeli hands and Israeli prisoners in Lebanon have yet to be returned. Sheik Obeid's kidnapping may have proved to be more significant in the context of United States-Israeli relations than as a Lebanese event. President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker were incensed by Israel's action. They resented the renewed focus on the hostage issue and its Iranian dimension, as well as the need to contemplate military action. They also argued that if a strategic relationship existed between the United States and Israel, it was the junior partner's responsibility to alert the senior partner to operations likely to affect its interests. This incident reinforced stronger trends that were altering the nature of the United States-Israeli relationship during 1989.

As for Lebanon, Israel signaled Syria that "red lines" (like the lines established in 1976 to limit Syrian military activity) must be observed. For its part, the United States, while acquiescing in Syria's imposition of Hrawi as President, did not want to see a Syrian invasion.

Finally, the Soviet Union, as Syria's superpower patron, was following a complex policy. It did not want to see Syria embroiled with Israel in the Lebanese context. At the same time, the Soviet Union recognized the potential benefits for a superpower seeking recognition of its role in the Middle East as the one power able to restrain Syria in Lebanon. This view should be understood against the background of the Soviet Union's "new policy" in the Middle East. Moscow is trying to reduce the danger of confrontation in that region and is willing to support the status quo, provided that its role is recognized as a part of that status quo.

The Soviet Union's decision to capitalize on its relationship with Syria became apparent during the last week of August when a senior Soviet diplomat, Gennadi Terasov, conducted "shuttle diplomacy" in Syria and Lebanon. He met with Syria's Foreign Minister Faruq Shara, Lebanon's two Prime Ministers (Hoss and Aoun), and with Walid Jumblat and Hussein Husseini (the speaker of Parliament). Terasov failed to achieve a cease-fire, but Moscow's message was clear.

The role sought by the Soviet Union in the Lebanese crisis added another dimension to what had become an all-too-familiar arena for regional and international rivalries. Mention has been made of the Syrian-Israeli and Iranian-Syrian rivalries. The PLO still seeks to reestablish a presence on Israel's borders and the issue of the Western hostages remains unresolved. Israel's "security belt" in southern Lebanon has remained an effective buffer zone, but at the price of a permanent though low-profile conflict involving Lebanese, Syrians, Iranians, Palestinians, Israelis and United Nations forces. ■

THE MONTH IN REVIEW

A Current History chronology covering the most important events of December, 1989, to provide a day-by-day summary of world affairs.

INTERNATIONAL

Central American Peace Plan

(See also *Intl, UN*)

Dec. 12—Meeting in San José, Costa Rica, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua sign a new peace agreement. The plan calls for international control of all aid (mostly U.S.) to the Nicaraguan contras; guerrillas in El Salvador are to be demobilized immediately.

European Community (EC)

Dec. 8—In Strasbourg, EC leaders agree to continue taking steps toward a central bank and common currency despite the continuing opposition of Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

Dec. 18—The EC and the Soviet Union sign a commercial accord that ends most EC quotas on Soviet exports.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

(See *Poland*)

International Terrorism

Dec. 28—Northwest Airlines notifies ticket holders for a flight from Paris to Detroit scheduled for December 29 that it has received "a security threat" against the flight.

Dec. 30—The Northwest flight from Paris to Detroit takes off and lands without incident; there are 28 passengers.

Malta Summit

Dec. 2—U.S. President George Bush meets with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in Malta.

Dec. 4—Presidents Bush and Gorbachev end their summit meeting; at a joint news conference they agree to attempt to conclude a strategic nuclear weapons treaty and a treaty on conventional arms limitations in 1990, and to try to integrate the Soviet Union into the global economy.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

(See *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)

(See *Israel; Lebanon*)

United Nations (UN)

(See also *Cambodia*)

Dec. 14—The UN General Assembly approves a declaration that sets political guidelines for the peaceful end of apartheid in South Africa.

Dec. 17—For the 1st time, the UN asks the U.S., the Soviet Union and Cuba to involve themselves directly in the Central American peace process.

Dec. 29—The General Assembly votes 75 to 20 with 39 abstentions (and 1 not present) to approve a resolution condemning the U.S. invasion of Panama.

Varsaw Treaty Organization (Warsaw Pact)

(See also *Czechoslovakia*)

Dec. 4—The Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria condemn the Soviet-led 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia as "illegal"; they promise not to interfere again in each other's affairs.

BRAZIL

Dec. 17—In Brazil's 1st direct presidential election since 1960, early returns show that candidates Fernando Collor de Mello of the National Renovation party and Luis Inácio da Silva of the Workers party are virtually tied.

Dec. 19—Da Silva concedes defeat in the presidential election.

Dec. 20—The government confirms that Collor won the presidential election. Collor won 42.7 percent of the votes, while da Silva won 38.1 percent.

BULGARIA

(See also *Intl, Warsaw Pact*)

Dec. 7—The official press agency says that 9 of Bulgaria's leading opposition groups have formed a unified front, the Union of Democratic Forces.

Dec. 8—The Communist party purges the Politburo; only 2 members of the regime of former General Secretary Todor Zhivkov remain.

Dec. 11—Communist party General Secretary Petar Mladenov says that the Communist monopoly on power must end and that Bulgaria must adopt "a multiparty system." He endorses constitutional reform and open elections.

BURKINA FASO

Dec. 26—The government announces that it put down a coup attempt on December 24 and has arrested several of the "mercenaries" involved.

CAMBODIA

Dec. 2—Prince Norodom Sihanouk, leader of the non-Communist opposition coalition, endorses a proposal that would dismantle the current Vietnam-backed government and allow a UN trusteeship to govern Cambodia.

Dec. 14—*The New York Times* reports that the Vietnam-backed government of Prime Minister Hun Sen announced on December 10 that it would accept UN-controlled elections in Cambodia.

Dec. 22—Khmer Rouge guerrillas claim that they have "liberated" Anlong Veng, a district capital—their most important victory since they captured Pailin on October 22.

Dec. 25—The army led by Prince Sihanouk says that the non-Communist resistance troops have combined with the Khmer Rouge to attack the Cambodian government.

CHILE

Dec. 14—Chileans vote in the nation's 1st presidential election in 19 years.

Dec. 15—In the final tabulation of 7 million votes in the presidential election, Christian Democratic candidate Patricio Aylwin receives 55.2 percent of the vote, defeating Hernán Büchi of the Independent Democratic Union.

CHINA

(See also *Japan; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 6—Xinhua News Agency reports that a motorcycle factory is the first state-owned enterprise permitted to declare bankruptcy. A national bankruptcy law became effective in November, 1988.

Dec. 9—U.S. National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and

Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger visit Beijing. The visit effectively ends the suspension of high-level contacts imposed by the U.S. after China's crackdown on prodemocracy demonstrators; it was not made public until the Americans arrived in China.

Dec. 15—China says it will devalue the yuan by 21.2 percent against the dollar as of December 16. The last devaluation took place in 1986.

Dec. 19—*The New York Times* reports that Scowcroft and Eagleburger visited Beijing in July, just after the U.S. halted high-level meetings with Chinese officials. The July trip was kept secret until December 18, when the U.S. made it public after a news organization reported it.

COLOMBIA

(See also *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 5—The Interior Ministry confirms that a bomb explosion caused the crash of an Avianca airliner in November; 107 people were killed in the crash.

Dec. 6—A truck bomb containing 1,000 pounds of explosives is detonated in front of secret police headquarters in Bogotá; the blast kills 35 people and damages 20 buildings.

Dec. 7—President Virgilio Barco Vargas blames narcotics traffickers for yesterday's bomb blast in Bogotá.

Dec. 15—Drug kingpin José Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha and his son are killed in a shoot-out with police.

COMORO ISLANDS

Dec. 6—France cuts off aid to the Comoros, citing its disapproval of a group of mercenaries who ousted and assassinated President Ahmed Abdallah on November 26.

Dec. 15—Mercenaries release control of the Comoros to French authorities.

COSTA RICA

(See *Intl, Central American Peace Plan*)

CUBA

(See *Intl, UN*)

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

(See also *Intl, Warsaw Pact*)

Dec. 1—The Czechoslovak Communist party Politburo says the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact forces was "unjustified."

Dec. 3—The main opposition group, the Civic Forum, rejects a proposed Cabinet that includes 16 Communist and 5 non-Communist ministers.

Dec. 4—More than 200,000 protesters jam Wenceslas Square in Prague to voice their disapproval of the government selected on December 3.

The Civic Forum says it will endorse candidates in elections scheduled for mid-1990.

Dec. 6—Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec threatens to resign unless his Cabinet is provided with "adequate conditions for its work."

Dec. 7—Adamec resigns and is replaced by Deputy Prime Minister Marian Calfa.

Dec. 10—A new Cabinet is sworn in and President Gustav Husak resigns from office. The new 21-member Cabinet has 11 non-Communist and 10 Communist ministers and is the 1st Cabinet not dominated by the Communists in 41 years. Calfa remains Prime Minister.

Dec. 15—The Defense Ministry says it will dismantle the nation's fortified border with West Germany.

Dec. 16—Opposition leader Vaclav Havel meets with former Communist party leader Alexander Dubcek, who was deposed in 1968 by Warsaw Pact forces.

Dec. 19—Parliament overwhelmingly approves a reform pro-

gram advocating free elections and a free-market economy in Czechoslovakia.

Dec. 20—The Communist party replaces Karel Urbanek as its leader, naming former Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec to replace Urbanek.

Dec. 28—Parliament unanimously elects Dubcek as chairman of Parliament.

Dec. 29—Parliament elects Vaclav Havel as President; Havel is the 1st non-Communist President in Czechoslovakia since 1948.

EGYPT

Dec. 11—Muslim fundamentalists and police clash in Assyut; the fundamentalists are angered by the actions of university students; 300 people are arrested and 40 are injured.

Dec. 27—Egypt and Syria announce that they will reestablish diplomatic relations in January, 1990.

EL SALVADOR

(See also *Intl, Central American Peace Plan*)

Dec. 1—President Alfredo Cristiani says that leftist rebels are now using anti-aircraft missiles against government planes.

Dec. 9—Cristiani proposes to renew peace talks with the rebels and offers a \$250,000 reward for information leading to the capture of the murderers of 6 Jesuit priests in November.

FRANCE

(See *Intl, International Terrorism; Comoro Islands*)

GERMANY, EAST

(See also *Intl, Warsaw Pact*)

Dec. 1—The Parliament deletes a clause in East Germany's constitution that guaranteed the Communist party the leading role in East German society.

Dec. 3—The 11-member Politburo, including General Secretary Egon Krenz, resigns from office. Former Communist party leader Erich Honecker and 11 other former Communist officials are expelled from the party.

Former economic adviser Gunter Mittag and 2 other former economic officials are arrested and charged with misuse of office. The party appoints lawyer Gregor Gysi to investigate the activities of the Honecker regime.

Dec. 4—Protesters in Leipzig call for German reunification and for the dissolution of the Communist party.

Dec. 5—The official press agency says that Honecker is among several deposed Politburo members under house arrest.

Dec. 6—Krenz relinquishes his official government title, Head of State, to Liberal Democratic party leader Manfred Gerlach.

Dec. 7—Government and opposition leaders hold roundtable discussions in East Berlin; both sides agree to write a new constitution and to hold free elections by May 6, 1990.

Dec. 9—The Communist party elects Gregor Gysi to the newly created position of chairman.

Dec. 19—East German Prime Minister Hans Modrow and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl meet in Dresden. They agree to reopen the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin and to permit open travel between the 2 nations.

Dec. 22—The Brandenburg Gate is reopened in a ceremony attended by Modrow and Kohl.

GERMANY, WEST

(See also *Germany, East*)

Dec. 14—West Germany postpones signing an agreement establishing open borders with 4 neighboring countries.

GUATEMALA

(See *Intl, Central American Peace Plan*)

HONDURAS

(See *Intl, Central American Peace Plan*)

HUNGARY

(See also *Intl, Warsaw Pact; Romania; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 22—The government announces that the 1st free elections in 41 years will be held on March 25, 1990.

INDIA

Dec. 1—V.P. Singh is chosen as the new Prime Minister; he heads a minority government in coalition with 4 left-wing parties and the conservative Bharatiya Janata party.

Dec. 5—Singh names his new Cabinet, but does not specify each member's portfolio. Singh says that he will not continue as president of the Janata Dal party.

Dec. 6—Singh assigns Cabinet portfolios; he includes a Muslim, Mohammed Sayeed, as minister of home affairs for the 1st time in modern India's history. Singh will act as defense minister; Inder Kumar Gujral will be foreign minister.

Dec. 8—The new finance minister says that India's external debt is about \$60.6 billion, almost twice the estimate made by the previous government.

Dec. 17—Three days after the government declared a curfew in Srinagar, Kashmir, troops and tanks are sent to prevent demonstrations in favor of Kashmiri independence.

Dec. 21—Singh wins a vote of confidence in Parliament; this vote was required by President Ramaswamy Venkataraman when he asked Singh to form a government.

Dec. 22—The Supreme Court upholds the \$470-million Union Carbide settlement of claims in the 1984 Bhopal poison gas disaster.

Dec. 26—Singh announces that India will not deal with the Swedish weapons manufacturer Bofors until the firm names Indians who were allegedly paid kickbacks in 1986.

Dec. 29—Parliament votes to repeal a constitutional amendment allowing the suspension of civil rights in Punjab state.

IRAN

(See also *Romania*)

Dec. 15—Leading hard-line politician Ali Akbar Mohtashemi wins a seat in Parliament.

IRAQ

Dec. 7—Iraq announces that on December 5 it tested a missile able to carry a payload into space.

ISRAEL

(See also *Panama; U.S.S.R.*)

Dec. 4—Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin admits that Israeli forces have not been able to quell the intifada (Palestinian uprising) that began in December, 1987.

Dec. 6—The Israeli Army bars Faisal Husseini, a well-known Palestinian nationalist leader, from entering the occupied territories for 6 months.

Dec. 9—On the 2d anniversary of the intifada, 2 Palestinians are shot and killed in the occupied territories. By some estimates, as many as 600 Palestinians have been killed since the intifada began.

Dec. 23—Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the South African Nobel prize winner, visits Jerusalem. Tutu voices his support for a Palestinian state and Israel's "territorial integrity."

Dec. 24—The Supreme Court orders the army to court-martial a colonel accused of ordering soldiers to break the limbs of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Dec. 26—Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir says that, despite opposition from his own Likud party, he will continue to press for elections in the occupied territories.

Israeli fighters bomb 2 Lebanese Communist party bases in southern Lebanon.

Dec. 31—Shamir fires Science Minister Ezer Weizman, an influential Labor party member; Shamir accuses Weizman of meeting with PLO leaders.

JAPAN

Dec. 17—The government says it will return to China a Chinese dissident who hijacked a China Airlines plane on December 16; the plane was forced to land in Fukuoka.

Dec. 19—The government announces that it will return to China 301 Chinese who sailed to Japan in July and August and claimed to be Vietnamese refugees seeking asylum. Japan considers them illegal economic migrants.

Dec. 24—Trade officials agree to a plan giving tax credits to firms that increase their imports of foreign-made machinery and other manufactured goods; this plan reverses the long-time practice of extending tax credits to encourage exports.

JORDAN

Dec. 4—Prime Minister Zayd bin Shakir resigns; he is replaced by former Prime Minister Mudar Badran.

Dec. 6—Badran names a Cabinet that does not include representatives from the Muslim Brotherhood, who hold the largest bloc of seats in Parliament.

Dec. 19—Badran tells Parliament the government will lift martial law provisions instituted in 1967.

KOREA, SOUTH

Dec. 8—South Korea says it has established partial consular relations with the Soviet Union; no formal consulates will be established.

Dec. 31—During former President Chun Doo Hwan's 1st appearance in Seoul since he stepped down in 1987, a scuffle breaks out that interrupts his testimony before the National Assembly concerning abuses of power under his rule.

LEBANON

(See also *Israel*)

Dec. 5—A 10-week cease-fire between Christian and Muslim forces ends as artillery exchanges rock Beirut.

Dec. 10—In a published interview, Syrian President Hafez Assad says that he will not hesitate to use force to remove Lebanese Christian leader General Michel Aoun from the presidential palace. Syria recognizes Elias Hrawi as the legitimate President of Lebanon.

Dec. 14—PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) guerrillas attack Syrian forces in southern Lebanon; 6 people are killed and 20 are wounded in the fighting.

Dec. 15—The government of President Hrawi says that all military funding must go not to General Aoun but to General Emile Lahoud, who has replaced General Aoun.

Dec. 23—Heavy fighting breaks out between Hezbollah and Amal forces in southern Lebanon; police say 17 people have been killed in the clashes between the 2 rival Shiite militias.

MALAYSIA

Dec. 2—Communist party of Malaya guerrillas end their 41-year insurgency against the government and sign cease-fire agreements with the Malaysian and Thai governments.

MOZAMBIQUE

(See *South Africa*)

NAMIBIA

Dec. 20—The 72-member Constituent Assembly approves a draft constitution that allows for a transition to total independence in March, 1990.

NICARAGUA

(See also *Intl, Central American Peace Plan; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 3—Exiled Nicaraguan contra leader Edén Pastora Gómez returns to Nicaragua; he says he will not run in the February, 1990, presidential election.

NIGERIA

Dec. 7—The government announces that Nigeria's first elections since 1963 (scheduled for the end of December, 1989) have been postponed to the end of 1990.

PANAMA

(See also *Intl, UN; U.S.; Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 15—The National Assembly names de facto leader General Manuel Antonio Noriega as Head of State, with official power to direct the government and conduct foreign affairs. The National Assembly also declares "a state of war" against the U.S. because of U.S. involvement in Panamanian affairs.

Dec. 16—Panamanian soldiers shoot at 4 off-duty U.S. soldiers in a scuffle in Panama City. U.S. authorities report that 1 of the Americans was killed; a U.S. officer who witnessed the affair was detained and beaten by Panamanian forces; his wife was threatened with sexual abuse.

Dec. 18—In Panama City, a Panamanian soldier is shot by a U.S. officer.

Dec. 20—A military force of 10,000 U.S. troops invades Panama; Guillermo Endara is inaugurated as President. Noriega flees his official residence.

Dec. 21—U.S. and Panamanian forces continue to battle as the U.S. invasion force searches for Noriega. Panama City is besieged by looters.

Dec. 22—Looting continues in Panama City; the U.S. sends 2,000 more soldiers to Panama and offers a \$1,000,000 bounty for information leading to the capture of Noriega.

Dec. 23—The Endara government dissolves the Panamanian Defense Forces. The U.S. claims to control most of Panama; it says that 24 U.S. soldiers, 1 U.S. civilian and 139 Panamanian soldiers have died in fighting so far.

Dec. 24—Noriega takes refuge at the Vatican embassy and asks for political asylum.

The U.S. says that Noriega's "reign of terror is over" and that it will pursue efforts to bring Noriega to justice.

Dec. 26—Businesses and government offices reopen in Panama; the fighting between U.S. troops and Noriega loyalists has apparently ended.

Dec. 28—The U.S. reports that Mike Harari, an Israeli who is believed to be Noriega's closest military adviser, has been arrested by U.S. soldiers in Panama.

Dec. 29—The Vatican terms the U.S. "an occupying force" with no right to demand former Panamanian leader Noriega's release; however, the Vatican is urging Noriega to leave its embassy in Panama voluntarily.

Dec. 30—A senior U.S. embassy official says that, despite earlier reports by the U.S. government, the U.S. does not have Harari in custody.

PHILIPPINES

(See also *U.S. Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 1—In the 6th and most serious attempt to oust President Corazon Aquino since she became President in 1986, rebel soldiers attack 3 military camps, seize 2 broadcast stations and bomb Malacanang, the presidential palace.

Dec. 2—Government warplanes attack rebel positions. One plane accidentally attacks civilians, killing 6 and wounding 20 people.

The government says it has arrested one of the coup leaders, Lieutenant Colonel Tito Legazpi. The rebels withdraw

from the broadcast stations and Villamor air base.

Rebels seize the center of Makati, the financial district, ignoring Aquino's order to surrender. They state that they will surrender only if Aquino resigns and calls for general elections.

Dec. 3—Rebels continue to battle with government troops in Makati. In 4 days of fighting, 100 people have been killed.

Dec. 5—The U.S. embassy urges Americans to evacuate Makati after heavy fighting breaks out again.

Dec. 6—Rebel troops agree to a cease-fire in order to evacuate foreigners in Makati hotels.

Aquino declares a national state of emergency, allowing the government to seize public utilities and other businesses.

Dec. 7—After 7 days, the rebels surrender.

Dec. 8—The *New York Times* reports that Philippine officials blame communications gaps for rebel success in seizing military installations; they credit U.S. war planes for enabling the government to prevail.

Aquino says she suspects that 3 men were involved in leading the coup: Vice President Salvador H. Laurel, opposition leader Senator Juan Ponce Enrile and Eduardo Cojuangco.

Dec. 9—The last rebels withdraw from Mactan Air Base on condition that their withdrawal not be termed a surrender.

Dec. 14—U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Nicholas Platt says that armed men fired rifle grenades into the American government compound. No one takes responsibility.

Dec. 16—Government troops are sent to the southern region of Davao following reports that renewed efforts are being made to overthrow Aquino.

Dec. 20—Aquino signs a bill giving her emergency powers for up to 6 months.

Dec. 28—The Justice Ministry says it has evidence implicating Enrile in the coup attempt. Enrile denies the accusations.

Dec. 31—Aquino appoints a new military adviser and new members to the Cabinet for the departments of transportation, finance, education, agrarian reform and agriculture.

POLAND

(See also *Intl, Warsaw Pact; U.S.S.R.; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 14—The government proposes an austerity package designed to reduce inflation and create a market-oriented economy. The measures are a prerequisite for an aid package sponsored by the International Monetary Fund.

Dec. 17—In Parliament, Deputy Prime Minister Leszek Balcerowicz outlines laws to overhaul the nation's economy.

ROMANIA

(See also *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 1—At a Politburo meeting, President Nicolae Ceausescu criticizes the Romanian Communist party and asks for improved consumer services.

Dec. 17—The Hungarian press agency says that in the western Romanian city of Timisoara, security forces and thousands of demonstrators engaged in a serious fight today. The demonstration began on December 16, when police tried to deport a dissident clergyman.

Dec. 18—Reports from Timisoara say that security forces used water cannons, tear gas and gunfire to put down the protest.

Dec. 19—Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union condemn the crackdown in Timisoara; the Yugoslav press agency Tanyug says that as many as 2,000 Romanians may have been killed.

Ceausescu pays a state visit to Iran, where he visits the grave of the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Dec. 20—Ceausescu blames "fascist" elements for instigating the revolt in Timisoara; a state of emergency is declared in western Romania, where large-scale demonstrations persist.

Dec. 21—In Bucharest, Ceausescu is shouted down by

thousands of citizens. Violent protests follow, with government troops firing on demonstrators.

Reports from Timisoara indicate that soldiers have joined the growing protest movement and that army units are fighting with security police.

Dec. 22—Army units join protesters in Bucharest and force Ceausescu from power. Fighting between the army and pro-Ceausescu security forces is heavy as the new government, the Council of National Salvation, arrests former government officials and takes control of state-run television. Ceausescu and his wife, Elena Ceausescu, have reportedly fled.

Romanian television reports finding mass graves in Timisoara, where security forces may have buried as many as 4,000 protesters.

Dec. 23—The new government says that Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu have been captured in Tirgoviste.

Dec. 25—Romanian television announces that after a secret trial, Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu were found guilty of various crimes, including genocide; they were then sentenced to death and executed by a firing squad.

Dec. 26—Ion Iliescu is named interim President by the new government and a Cabinet is appointed. At least 17 countries recognize the government.

Tapes of the Ceausescus' trial and execution are shown on television; pro-Ceausescu forces begin to surrender.

Dec. 27—The government begins to ease restrictions imposed by the Ceausescu regime, ending the ban on abortion and the requirement that all typewriters be registered.

Dec. 30—The Communist party announces that it will call a special congress where it will formally dissolve the party.

SOUTH AFRICA

(See also *Intl, UN; Israel*)

Dec. 6—South African police say that 5 people have been arrested in connection with the assassination of 2 white anti-apartheid leaders in May and September, 1989. Three other suspects are already in custody.

Dec. 11—In the 1st private prosecution of security officials in South Africa, a judge acquits 12 policemen and an army officer in connection with the death of 3 young men near Cape Town in 1985.

Dec. 13—In Cape Town, President F.W. de Klerk and imprisoned ANC (African National Congress) leader Nelson Mandela discuss the possibility of Mandela's release in 1990.

Dec. 15—President de Klerk says South Africa has cut off funds to Renamo (Mozambique National Resistance) guerrillas in Mozambique.

SRI LANKA

Dec. 14—Amnesty International says that over 1,000 people are killed every month in political violence between Tamils and Sinhalese.

Dec. 28—The Foreign Ministry says that, on December 26, the last senior leader of the Sinhalese People's Liberation Front was captured and killed in Columbo.

SUDAN

Dec. 5—After 5 days of discussions, peace talks between the government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army collapse. Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter has interceded as a mediator.

Dec. 12—An Amnesty International report blames militias supported by Sudan's government for "gross human rights abuses" in the last 6 years and for devastating regions where war-induced famine has killed 250,000 people.

SYRIA

(See *Egypt; Lebanon*)

TAIWAN

Dec. 2—In the 1st election that included a legal opposition party, the ruling Kuomintang (Nationalist party) wins a majority, but the opposition Democratic Progressive party (DPP) wins high-level positions in 5 of the 6 county elections.

THAILAND

(See *Malaysia*)

U.S.S.R.

(See also *Intl, EC, Malta Summit, UN, Warsaw Pact; Korea, South; Romania; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Dec. 1—At the Vatican, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev talks with Pope John Paul II; they agree to renew diplomatic ties between the Vatican and the Soviet Union.

Members of the Ukrainian Catholic Church say the Church has won the right to register legally in the Soviet Union.

Dec. 7—By a vote of 243 to 1 with 39 abstentions, the Lithuanian Parliament amends its constitution to eliminate the Communist monopoly on political power.

Dec. 11—Preliminary reports from Latvian city and regional elections reveal that the Latvian Popular Front, a non-Communist group, has won more than 50 percent of the vote.

Dec. 13—The *New York Times* reports that the emigration of Soviet Jews reached a record level in November, 1989; as many as 750,000 Soviet Jews may leave for Israel within 6 years.

Dec. 14—Human rights activist Andrei Sakharov dies of a heart attack.

Dec. 15—The Soviet Union announces that it will cut military spending by 8.2 percent in 1990.

Dec. 18—Sakharov's funeral is broadcast on national television; dignitaries including Gorbachev and Polish labor leader Lech Walesa attend.

Dec. 19—In Moscow, a national meeting of Jewish representatives is held, the 1st such gathering since 1917.

The Congress of People's Deputies approves a plan proposed by Gorbachev to slow the pace of economic reform in the Soviet Union.

Dec. 20—By a vote of 855 to 160 with 12 abstentions, the Lithuanian Communist party decides to break away from the Communist party of the Soviet Union.

Dec. 23—In an impromptu speech, Gorbachev tells the Congress that Baltic separatist movements could "sow discord, bloodshed and death."

Dec. 24—The Congress passes a resolution condemning the 1939 Nazi German-Soviet pact that ceded control of the Baltic states to the Soviet Union.

Dec. 26—An emergency 2-day Central Committee meeting ends; Gorbachev has promised to go to Lithuania to speak to dissatisfied Communist party members.

Dec. 28—Voting 220 to 50, the Latvian Communist party eliminates from the Latvian constitution the clause giving the Communist party the leading role in society.

UNITED KINGDOM

Great Britain

(See *Intl, EC; U.K., Hong Kong*)

Hong Kong

(See also *Vietnam*)

Dec. 12—In the first forced repatriation of boat people, Hong Kong sends 51 Vietnamese refugees back to Vietnam.

Dec. 13—After worldwide criticism, a British government official says that there will probably be no further forced

repatriation in 1989 but defends the program, saying that the deportations will resume in 1990.

Dec. 20—The British government announces that it will grant full British citizenship to as many as 225,000 people in Hong Kong; they will then have the right to settle in Britain.

UNITED STATES

Administration

Dec. 15—President George Bush rejects the recommendation of Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and the Air Force Strategic Air Command (SAC) to reduce round-the-clock airborne nuclear command surveillance. The SAC recommended the reduction because, it believes, there is now less risk of a surprise Soviet nuclear attack.

Dec. 18—The General Accounting Office (GAO) reports that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has been slow to implement the increased security measures required after the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103.

Economy

Dec. 1—The Commerce Department reports that its index of leading economic indicators fell 0.4 percent in October.

Dec. 8—The Labor Department reports that the nation's unemployment rate for November was 5.3 percent.

Dec. 15—The Commerce Department reports that the October trade deficit was \$10.2 billion, the highest in 10 months.

The Labor Department reports that producer prices fell by 0.1 percent in November, mostly because of gas prices. The annual rate of inflation was 4.6 percent through November.

Dec. 29—The Commerce Department reports that its index of leading economic indicators rose 0.1 percent in October.

Foreign Policy

(See also *Intl. Central American Peace Plan, International Terrorism, Malta Summit, UN; China; India; Panama; Philippines; Romania; Sudan*)

Dec. 1—The Defense Department says that President George Bush authorized U.S. F-4 jets to go into action against Philippine rebel aircraft with orders to fire if Philippine aircraft left the ground at their bases; the President acted at the request of Philippine President Corazon Aquino.

Dec. 4—President Bush meets in Brussels with the other leaders of NATO to brief them on his meeting with Gorbachev.

Dec. 12—Deputy U.S. trade representative S. Linn Williams announces an agreement with the 18 nations who supply two-thirds of U.S. imported steel; the 18 nations promise to end subsidies to their manufacturers.

Dec. 13—White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater says that President Bush will attend a 4-nation conference on narcotics in Cartagena, Colombia.

Dec. 19—President Bush waives a congressional ban on loans for companies doing business in China and agrees to allow the export of satellites subsequently to be launched by China. These actions undercut some of the sanctions imposed by the U.S. in June.

Dec. 20—U.S. forces invade Panama.

Attorney General Richard Thornburgh says that the U.S. invasion of Panama is legal.

Dec. 22—Bush administration officials say the U.S. will offer assistance to the new Romanian government if it adopts political and economic reforms similar to those adopted in Poland and Hungary.

Dec. 25—The U.S. establishes diplomatic relations with the new government in Romania; it expresses regret that Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu's trial and subsequent execution took place in secret.

Dec. 29—U.S. soldiers search the residence of the Nicaraguan ambassador to Panama.

Dec. 30—President Bush admits that U.S. soldiers made a "screw-up" when they searched the Nicaraguan ambassador's house; army spokesmen say that they thought "the house was not covered under diplomatic immunity."

Military

Dec. 19—Admiral Carlisle Trost sends a message to all fleet commanders saying that poor supervision, failed safety procedures and general laxness contributed to the recent series of serious accidents suffered by the Navy.

Political Scandal

Dec. 4—Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision M. Danny Wall resigns under criticism for his inadequate supervision of the scandal-plagued savings and loan industry.

Dec. 22—The Senate Ethics Committee announces it will open a formal investigation into charges of influence peddling and improper conduct by 6 Senators—Alphonse D'Amato (R., N.Y.), Dennis DeConcini (D., Ariz.), John McCain (R., Ariz.), Alan Cranston (D., Calif.), Donald Riegle (D., Mich.) and John Glenn (D., Ohio).

Supreme Court

Dec. 5—In a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court overrules a lower court and holds that under the Civil Rights Act of 1871, state and local government can be sued for damages for intervening improperly in labor negotiations.

Dec. 11—The Court refuses to hear and thus upholds a U.S. Court of Appeals decision overturning the conviction of former White House aide Lynn Nofziger on charges of illegal lobbying under the Ethics in Government law.

Terrorism

Dec. 16—In Birmingham, Alabama, U.S. Appeals Court Judge Robert Vance is killed at his home by a bomb he received in the mail.

Dec. 18—A bomb similar to the one that killed Vance kills Robert Robinson, a civil rights lawyer in Savannah; a third bomb is found in a federal court building in Atlanta and is disarmed.

Dec. 19—A fourth bomb is found undetonated at the local headquarters of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) in Jacksonville, Florida.

Dec. 22—Judge John P. Corderman, a criminal court judge in Maryland, is critically wounded when a package bomb explodes at his home; this bomb is said to be "dissimilar" to the other bombs.

Dec. 28—An Atlanta television station releases a letter it received from a group claiming responsibility for the bombs that killed Vance and Robinson.

VATICAN

(See *Panama; U.S.S.R.*)

VIETNAM

(See also *Cambodia; Japan; U.K.; Hong Kong*)

Dec. 16—The government protests the Hong Kong government's forced repatriation of Vietnamese boat people.

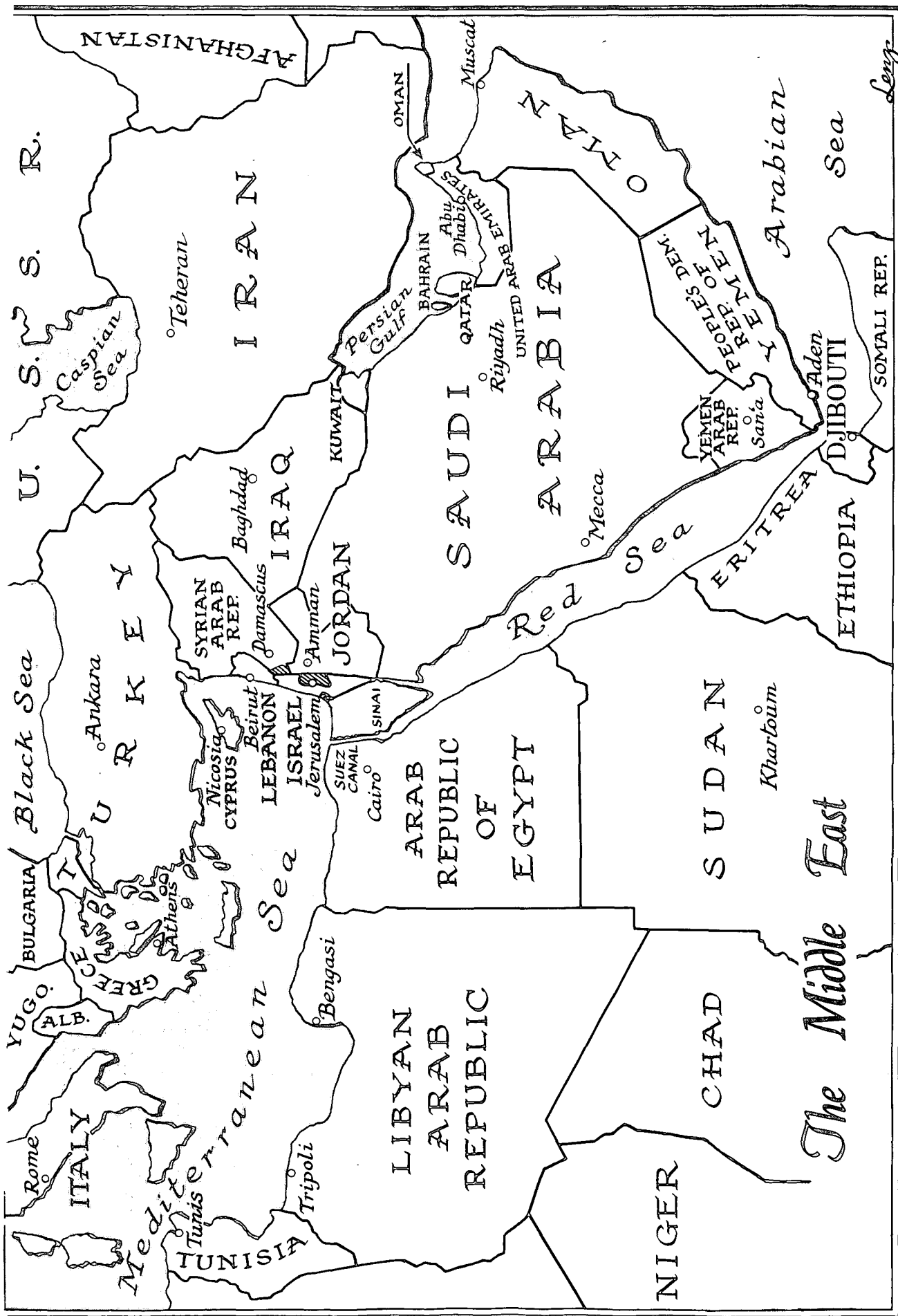
YUGOSLAVIA

(See also *Romania*)

Dec. 18—The government proposes an economic reform program that includes a 6-month wage freeze and the creation of a new currency. The plan must be approved by all 6 republics.

Dec. 19—The republic of Serbia rejects the economic reform measures proposed by the central government.

Dec. 20—About 650,000 Serbian workers stage a brief strike to protest the central government's reform program. ■



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